

My Daughter's Eccentricity Rivals No One

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Mature

Archive Warning:

Graphic Depictions Of Violence

Category:

Gen

Fandoms:

僕のヒーローアカデミア | Boku no Hero Academia | My Hero Academia, Naruto

Relationship:

Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead & Haruno Sakura

Characters:

Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead, Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead's Mother, Yamada Hizashi | Present Mic, Kayama Nemuri | Midnight, Original Characters, Haruno Sakura, Class 1-A (My Hero Academia), Class 1-B (My Hero Academia), U.A.'s Big Three (My Hero Academia), Kamihara Shinya | Edgeshot, Shiretoko Tomoko | Ragdoll, Bakugou Katsuki, Bakugou Katsuki's Parents, Midoriya Izuku, Midoriya Inko

Additional Tags:

I'll Add Tags As I Go On, Sakura has issues like all mc's should, Protective Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead, Protective Yamada Hizashi | Present Mic, Protective Kayama Nemuri | Midnight, Swearing, Negligence, Abuse, Sakura is good at coming up with bullshit, Sakura get's reborn as Shota's daughter, Endear-ish, Eventual Romance, Sakura will kill for Shota, BAMF Haruno Sakura, Sakura and Izuku and Katsuki are friends, Katsuki isn't an asshole, Sort Of, Dadzawa, Flashbacks, Someone needs a therapist, Sakura just won't stop getting into trouble

Language:

English

Collections:

Lady's collection of PERFECT fics., I Read This Instead of Sleeping, Lady's collection of PERFECT crossovers, Adored Clutter, Fics that

give me life, Road to Nowhere Discord Recs, fanfics that i keep coming back to read, A Collection of Beloved Inserts, my heart is here, SH Crossovers, Ashes' Library, Magnolia's Favourite Fics, Reincarnated as a original character, Mha heart mah soul, Leymonaide fic recs, SakurAlpha's Fic Rec of Pure how did you create this you amazing bean, Naruto x Boku no Hero Academia, Stories That Are Cool, Naruto Women Supremacy, Quality Fics, Best female MC fics, To_read_non_rom, Fluffness, naruto fanfics that satisfy my depression and issues, The Many Iterations of Haruno Sakura, BAMF Sakura Haruno - My girl deserves to be written as the powerful woman she is 🌀, "Where the F am I?!" ♪ - Or characters moving through universes and timelines, The Overly Toasted Bagel Collection, Pacing's bests, Strong BAMF Sakura, ~ angry pomeranian approved ~, The Tales of a Shinobi, Lilranko Interesting Read List, 💎Other Fanfics💎, fluffy fics!, BNHA Good Crossovers ☐, trauma shack, 💖 ✧.*≡☆ · ∴;* 💖, Crossovers that make my jaw drop, fics that made me lose sleep bcs it's soooo good!, oh stars~! (^ O ^ ☆♪, Hebe's Cup of De-Aged Characters, Love these, Reincarnation and Transmigration

Stats:

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Chapters: 14/?

My Daughter's Eccentricity Rivals No One

by [cherishfools](#)

Summary

Aizawa Shota liked to think he didn't have many regrets. And if he could physically count all the things he'd done that he'd ended up regretting, then it was extra assurance to his first statement, though getting wasted on his dead friend's grief and losing his virginity in the process had definitely slithered up to the first rank.

Sakura had many regrets in life, and it wasn't exactly a stretch to say her regrets stacked up to match the Hokage monuments. But killing herself wasn't one of them.

Or

Sakura's reborn as Shota's daughter and wreaks havoc in everyone's life. In a good way, of course.

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Edit (26 Jan 2024) : Currently on Hiatus. Unsure when I'll be back, but working on it!!

Notes

Helo!

I've been reading lots of bnha fics lately and have been tempted to write one of my own. If you've read the summary, then you know it's a crossover.

I've read enough reincarnation and isekai mangas' to be inspired by this idea, so I'm hoping that this will be an enjoyable fic to all! Also, DON'T copy my works to other sites. Please.

Naruto and BNHA don't belong to me (obviously)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Baby at the doorstep

Chapter Summary

Aizawa has a hard time accepting his kid and his pettiness is off the charts.

Chapter Notes

BNHA AND NARUTO DON'T BELONG TO ME! (Obviously)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Aizawa Shota liked to think he didn't have many regrets. And if he could physically count all the things he'd done that he'd ended up regretting, then it was an extra assurance to his first statement.

And getting wasted on his dead friend's grief and losing his virginity in the process had slithered up to the first rank.

But that was twelve months ago. And it was *fine* now. Those moments had long passed, and his emotions were under control, he'd graduated high school just last week and made sure not to touch any sort of alcoholic beverage at the after-party Hizashi had forcefully shoved him into. And he was coping well with the cliché '*let bygones be bygones*' bullshit ringing in his head for well over two months after said regretful, wreck of a night.

But, let bygone be bygones was not applicable in this situation because, well, *fuck* .

Because apparently, he had a *child* at the age of seventeen.

And the child was sleeping soundly, unlike the jolts of panic coursing through his veins.

Now, he wasn't gullible enough to believe *any* child left at his doorstep was going to be his. No. That was plain stupid. But the confirming factor was a letter that came with the baby-containing basket, a piece of paper he had read over three times now.

Dear Shota,

I don't know if you remember me, but I'm the girl who you shared your sob story with and later ended up fucking. And this baby that you got along with this lovely letter is the result of our very passionate night. Due to the scene before you, the conclusion should be obvious; I'm abandoning the child.

Yes, I know what you're thinking. I'm a shitty mother, I know . But having that milk-sucking mush-face was not by choice, I'd have aborted it if I could. I was going to shove her off to an orphanage, but turns out, I'm not so shitty after all. I made the effort to find you , her dear papa, and sent her to you. After all, it takes two to tango, and I did my part by carrying

her for nine months and tolerating her for two extra months, now you do yours.

I'm a free spirit. I don't want to be shackled by children or relationships or any of that mucky bullshit. But the last time we met, you said you were a hero-in-training and all you heroes are good for is wearing your hearts on your sleeves. I'm sure you'll take good care of her. Or not. Your fucking choice really, she's not my responsibility anymore.

Good luck with parenthood!

With a pinch of love,

Your baby mama.

(p.s, you can do a DNA test if you don't believe me, either way, don't toss her back to me!)

He crumpled the letter. The *sheer* audacity of this woman...

*

When the sun dipped and the sky flushed purple, he didn't exit his apartment to perform his usual patrols.

(More like he couldn't.)

What would he do to the child he still had yet to confirm was his? What would he do once the child woke up from her slumber? How could he find the mother of this child and sue her till kingdom come? *What would he do if the child turned out to be his?*

Before his head exploded with the swirling thoughts, he unpocketed his phone and dialed Hizashi. Then Kayama. Both of them should be finishing their patrols and on their way home.

He sighed, dropping his phone on the wooden table, standing up to walk where he kept the basket. To his elevating apprehension, the child was *awake*. It— *she* blinked at him, brilliant viridescent eyes focusing on where he was.

"Don't cry," he commanded, thinking she was going to, and he hoped she wouldn't.

He was eighteen and *barely* started his hero career, he was in no shape or form ready for parenthood. Heck even actual married people weren't ready for parenthood and raised the most dysfunctional little shits, then what was he compared to them? And that was assuming this child was his. He hoped she wasn't so that he could hand her over to the police to find her loony-bin mother and locate her genuine father, or just place her in a nice, homey orphanage.

Shota continued to watch the baby as if she was a ticking time bomb. And the baby stared back at him with almost bored eyes. Could babies even have bored eyes?

A knock resounded, shifting his attention from the child before he zoomed to the front door and yanked it open with such force, startling the shit out of the other two behind the door.

“What’s up with your face, Sho?” Hizashi questioned without missing a beat.

Kayama tossed her hair behind her and quirked an eyebrow, “What emergency could you *possibly* have that we had to meet before Friday?”

Shota didn't say anything, ushering them both inside as he promptly stuffed the crumpled paper in Hizashi's hand. “Some woman left a baby outside my door and I have no idea what to do with it.”

“What?”

“.... *pfft* ”

Kayama bit her cheeks, finding Hizashi's styled hair more intriguing than Shota's unamused face.

“Read that, she left it in the basket along with the child.” he gestured to the crumpled paper in Hizashi's hand while Kayama spotted the infamous basket.

Kayama pranced towards the basket, instructing Hizashi to read it out loud.

Shota felt an oncoming headache as he too, turned to reach where Kayama was. Hizashi shrugged, himself surprised at how calm he was being at the prospect of someone leaving a real, *live* baby at his insomniac best friend's house. He smoothed over the creases on the pink paper, clearing his throat before proceeding to read: “ *Dear Shota,*

I don't know if you remember me, but I'm the girl who you shared your sob story with and later ended up fucking — holy cow— Sho, what the fuck am I reading?!"

Shota flinched, his gray eyes finding the green orbs once more, although this time, she was staring at Kayama with the same bored eyes. While Kayama had been enamored by the child for a split second, Hizashi's zealous letter recitation had her slipping off the sofa which nearly caused the basket to topple along with her, but Shota's hands secured the child before the basket fell, and Kayama shrieked at the falling basket.

Only when she saw that the baby hadn't taken the fall did her head whip at the letter Hizashi was withholding, his eyes practically bulging out of his yellow goggles.

*

"Let me get this straight." Kayama said, "You fucked someone, and this *lunatic* lady *somehow* found your address, parceled a goddamn baby with a letter that says she's *abandoning* the child to you because *you're* the *papa* and she's irresponsible as fuck. And you're not sure if the baby is *yours* , but you remember rolling in the bed with someone twelve months ago?"

"Vaguely, yes," Shota answered calmly, his hand still awkwardly holding the child.

"Shota," Kayama pressed, running a hand through her dark purple hair, "I have no words to comfort you. Seriously, dude, you're what? Eighteen? If the DNA results come out positive, then you're fucked."

"That's reassuring." he leaned back on the sofa.

"Did it ever cross your mind to use *protection* ?" Kayama egged on, "Or, *I don't know* , take one of your friends down to where ever you were going so that we could watch over you from doing anything *stupid* —"

"That's enough." Hizashi cut in, still staring down at the most impetuous piece of letter he had ever read, "You can't change what's already been done. The only thing we can do is give this child a better

home.”

Kayama snorted, eyes wandering to Shota’s awkward hold on the child, “You’re speaking as if you’re sure that she isn’t Sho’s kid.”

Hizashi looked up, meeting Shota’s tired gaze with solemn eyes, “Be honest, if she *does* turn out to be your kid, can you guarantee a healthy environment for her to grow up in? Can you handle the extra workload of looking after a baby during the day and doing your job as a hero in the night? Can you clean up after a child when you can barely clean this place? Babies are high maintenance, you know? They cry they shit as soon as they eat, diapers, clothes, doctor visits, you think you can handle that when you’re like the least *maintenance* needing person I know?” he sighed deeply, “Do you, yourself, think you’re capable of looking after a kid, Sho? Answer me honestly.”

“...no.”

Hizashi smiled sadly, “Then you know what to do.”

*

The wind flapped around at him harshly, pushing his capture weapon against his nape while his hair rose as if his quirk was activated.

Then you know what to do.

He didn't know what to do.

Hizashi was being pragmatic, slapping all the facts on his face and listing reasons *why* he couldn't raise a kid. And he appreciated his friend for that. But if there was an off chance the child was *his*, and he had just let the kid go because he couldn't raise her— which was sort of a valid reason because why make the child suffer when she could live a much happier life?

Still, it didn't feel right to give her away. Not when she *might* be his. *Not when there was a ninety-nine percent chance that it was his.*

He understood the effects of a soulless childhood. And god forbid, he would never subject a similar experience to his kid, but still.

..... I'm sure you'll take good care of her. Or not. Your fucking choice really, she's not my responsibility anymore.

*.....I'd have aborted it if I could. I was going to shove her off to an orphanage, but turns out, I'm not so shitty after all. I made the effort to find you, **her dear Papa,***

His chest tightened as he jumped to the garbage dump below, the lid rattling under his weight.

She's not my responsibility anymore.

Then she was supposed to be his responsibility? Him? Eighteen-year-old Aizawa Shota struggled to feed himself properly.

I'd have aborted her (you) if I could

That's exactly what his mother sneered at him before leaving for work.

Shove her off to an orphanage,

Such a cruel thing to say to a child.

Her dear papa

Him .

Shota broke into a run, exiting the narrow alley as his blood thrummed. He wasn't the father. He wasn't the father. He wasn't the father. He wasn't the father—

Not until the test proved it.

*

Shota strolled into his apartment at sharp twelve, a large bag hanging off his right arm as he tugged his silver goggles under his capture weapon.

Hizashi was dozing on the single sofa with his mouth open, his grating snores resounding in the living room while Kayama was beside the basket, the child resting on her chest and an empty bottle hanging off her right hand.

The first thing he did was set down the bag filled with random baby

products he bought on the kitchen counter, then stalked over to Kayama to retrieve the kid and put her back in the basket. And *behold*, the child was stark awake, looming at him with those green eyes that seemed too unsettling on a child.

"What're you awake for?"

The kid blinked, opening her mouth as if to talk, but all that escaped was deflated babble, then her light brows furrowed, in concentration or anger, he couldn't tell, but it was the first expression she made other than that bored one she wore.

He found it amusing.

Then a 'poof' echoed and he stifled a laugh.

"Well, that smells lovely."

The child looked close to crying, cheeks puffed and eyes angry. So much emotion packed in a two-month-old child's face, it was almost surreal. He placed her close to his chest and picked up the supplies he bought before walking over to his room to somehow change her nappy.

The body was so light and thin, with barely anything on her bones except for the little fat on her cheeks. Just *what* did that woman feed her? He lifted one foot and wiped the tiny butt all the while the child tried to kick up a fuss.

"I'm *trying* to clean you." he stated the obvious, "So stay still, alright?"

Not alright at all. She seemed to get more aggressive at his words, kicking at his hands and grumbling wildly, but never crying. Finally, having enough of the nasty smell evading his nose, he grabbed hold of her tiny feet that perfectly fit in one palm and lifted her gently to get the task over with.

She calmed down after that, although glaring at him. He ignored it, reaching for a fresh nappy. After tossing the stained one she wore in the bin, he dressed her in a simple green onesie. He contemplated doing the same for the blanket she was smothered in, but it looked relatively new, so he hauled it in his overflowing laundry basket and wrapped her in a cat-eared blanket, then placed her on his bed with the right amount of barricade pillows.

He knew his qualifications for taking care of a child were shit. He was

well aware of that. But he *at least* had the right to know whether this kid was his or not before giving her away, right? Hizashi wasn't too keen on that idea, but Kayama seemed to be on board despite her incensed sarcasm. Hence why they agreed to babysit her till he came back.

Either way, she was going to be sent to a ' *better* ' home to live a much better life and this chapter of his life was going to close forever.

Yeah, It was— ' *Hnnngg* !'

He peered down at the noise.

'Hnnnngh!' she was kicking his thighs despite the wrap she was in, eyes watery once more, but the look in her eyes was unadulterated frustration.

Impressive.

"....are you takin' a shit again?"

She screamed this time, her fisted hands moving frantically as if hoping to punch him.

What is it that kids did? They shat, screamed, cried, laughed, slept, and ate— *ah*.

"Alright, just don't cry." he attempted to comfort her, lifting the weight-less child from the barricade he created as he exited the room with the milk formula he purchased, snagging the empty bottle from Kayama and stirring her awake.

"...Sho? You're here?" she grumbled, rubbing at her eyes, yawning. "Wha' time iszit? I think I'm goin' to crash 'ere for the— THE BABY! THE BABY'S MISSING!"

Hizashi slid from the sofa he was slumbering on, head shaking at the commotion as he tried to make sense of what was happening. Shota rolled his eyes, "She's with me."

"Dude, when'd you get home?" Hizashi asked hoarsely, peering at his friend while Shota sacked the child on him and wandered off to the kitchen. He climbed back on the sofa, his hold a little clumsy on the weightless bundle and Kayama was already curling on the two-seated sofa to continue her slumber.

Shota didn't answer, shrugging at the question as he washed the bottle, then washed it once more with hot water before adding the formula and shaking it to the point of foam rising. He trusted the bottle at Hizashi's waiting hands and sat on the wooden coffee table, observing the kid's actions with critical eyes.

"I have an early morning shift tomorrow, so I won't be able to go with you to the hospital, neither can Kayama. You sure you're going to be alright?"

Shota scoffed, "I'm not a kid."

Hizashi shrugged, "That's fine." For a while, the faint sound of suckling was all that was heard before the blond let out a deep sigh, "You know, I think I already know how this is going to play out."

"What?"

"Never mind."

*

Shota was having a crisis.

And his crisis was blaring in all directions.

First was the DNA test, which was only a fifteen-minute process. And it was a *match*. No surprise there.

No, what came after that was more gear-grinding.

So he sat in the hospital cafeteria, one hand resting on the carrier on his chest and the other hand twirling a pen, deeply submerged in his thoughts to think of a *name*. The kid was going to need her official documents in check if she was going to be sent to a 'better' home, not to mention all the vaccines the damnable woman probably *forgot* to get the kid with her irresponsible stature in full swing. He seriously doubted *where* this kid was born too, what kind of fuck up medical establishments didn't procure documents of birth? Illegal ones.

Or there was a chance that she *did* give birth to the kid normally and secured all legal documents and just *chose* not to give it to him because it would lead him right to her. If she wasn't dumb enough to

get caught by the cameras near his apartment, then the former possibility wasn't too far off the mark.

Estimating her birth date was a little tricky when the woman gave him only vague facts to work with, but he could narrow it down to someday in January. So he wrote down the twenty-ninth as the final day, time could be made up easily, and one of the parents' names was left vacant, but *her* name was.

The *name* was on a national level difficulty.

His thought process was interrupted when he felt tiny thumps against his chest. She was staring again. "Hungry?" and he didn't need a reply to start making a new bottle.

He watched as she suckled the bottle with a conflicted gaze. The matter of the name didn't even *need* to be serious. The people who were supposedly going to give her a 'better' home were going to rename her anyways, there was no use in pondering over it this much. He sighed deeply. "You know what? I'm going to name you the first thing that comes to mind." And he took a deep breath, mentally shuffling his brain as the suckling sound barely made it into his ears. He shut his eyes and clenched his teeth, shaking his head and probably looking like a lunatic, but when he opened his eyes and peered down at the kid's bright, always angry eyes, a name clicked in his mind.

"Asuka." he said, " *Aizawa Asuka* ." he tested, blinking at the kid. And of course, the odd kid looked at him, slightly astounding him when her gaze wasn't bored or irate, just in slight *awe* ?... or he might've read into it too much.

Either way, for the rest of the hospital trip, she didn't glare at him or look at him like he was the scum of the earth— *except* for when he tried cleaning after her excretion.

It was three thirty-two in the afternoon when he finally escaped the hospital with the paperwork, kid— *Asuka's* overdue check up which resulted in the pediatrician threatening him to oversee the kid's health properly or he was going to call child services. Well, it wasn't the doctor's *exact* words, but it implied all the same. Necessary vaccine shots were given along with a little rattle to distract Asuka from the pain. Not that the kid needed that, she was practically asleep when it happened anyways.

They strolled along the crowded pavement, heading towards his

apartment to rest up for a few hours before his shift started. But then Asuka started *giggling* and he almost crashed into a pole.

Evidently, the consistently foul-mood child's source of happiness was Kamihara Shinya, his classmate, more avidly known as Pro Hero Edgeshot. She was squealing now, fist waving from the pure excitement of witnessing *Edgeshot*. And the man wasn't even doing anything, he was just walking.

Still, it was a rare occurrence for him that she was *this* happy. So he did what he thought every Temporary Father who was going to give up his daughter for adoption solely because he wasn't qualified to raise her— he strode up to the hero and greeted him.

"Aizawa," Shinya said, bobbing his head as he acknowledged his classmate.

"Kamihara." Shota parroted, wondering what else he was supposed to say. Turns out, he didn't need to say anything because Asuka had taken the liberty to tug on the hero's red scarf, babbling zealously in baby speech as Shinya blinked in surprise.

"Your sister?" Shinya questioned, genuinely bemused at the cheerful child.

"Daughter, actually." he countered, trying his best to swallow the defensiveness in his tone. A daughter he was soon going part with so that she could be with a 'better' family.

"Oh," his astonishment was clear, "Daughter." Shinya repeated dumbly, "She's...cute." he recovered, slightly bending his posture so that he could meet the child's eyes.

"Well, I won't be taking too much of your time since you're on your patrol," Shota said, reaching for his pocket to retrieve his phone, "but can you take a picture with her? She seems to like you. Or your costume. Whichever, really." and he wiggled Asuka out of the carrier as he handed the befuddled hero the two-month-old child, "Watch out for the head." he reminded, taking a step back as he focused the camera. When he clicked enough pictures, none of which Asuka was motionless, he slipped back his phone before promptly taking Asuka, waving his dazed classmate goodbye.

Later, he didn't detour to the apartment like he initially planned, but wandered off to the beach.

He clipped the carrier from his shoulder and heaved the girl out with no effort before taking off the carrier completely, and discarded it on top of the baby bag. Then he sat her down on his thigh, safely tucking her in his arm, careful to support her head.

Asuka was staring again, green eyes glimmering from the sun resting on the horizon. "You don't seem like a normal baby," he pronounced lightly.

Her reaction was what he wasn't expecting.

A smile.

She seemed to be doing that a lot in the past fifteen minutes.

"Look, *Asuka*, I know you won't remember or process anything I'm about to say, but this will be the only time I can spend time with you before you're sent to a 'better' home." she blinked, head lolling to the side and his hand reflexively went to the tuft of black hair on her head, fixing his posture so that she wouldn't droop to a side. "I'm... eighteen, turning nineteen this year. And as harsh as this sounds, you were a mistake." he caressed the fluffy hair on her head absent-mindedly, his lips tugged in a wry smile.

"But still, I'd like to apologize. You didn't ask to be born, and you didn't have a choice in getting such a devilishly irresponsible *mama* or a severely under-qualified *papa* ." he traced the lining of her brows and brushed the hair on her forehead with his thumb, "I'm sorry, Asuka. I'm sorry that you have terrible parents. But you deserve better, and that's why I'm putting you up for adoption." Asuka's fingers clamped around the side of his palm and he smiled amusedly, she probably didn't like him being so touchy.

"Don't worry about being hauled off to another dump. I'll make sure to review the list of guardians myself. It's the least I could do for leaving you with your mother for two months." he blinked to clear his eyes, thinking he was hallucinating when he witnessed Asuka's lips wobble. "—are you going to cry?" he panicked internally, pulling his hand away. Did she hate being touched this much? He watched cautiously as her eyes glazed with unshed tears, "Sorry." he mumbled, patting her chest to calm her down. "Sorry."

The two-month-old burst into tears for the first time since appearing

at his doorsteps, her tiny mouth producing such shrieks that the elderly couple walking along the shore whipped their heads at him. Shota cursed under his breath, simultaneously trying to position her head on his shoulder in an attempt to imitate the actions of a woman he saw at the hospital who calmed their child *fairly* easily. But Asuka didn't allow him to position her, fisting her hands on his shirt and burying her head into the junction of his arm.

“Asuka, please stop crying.” he attempted pathetically. “..I will do *anything*, just stop crying, *please* .”

“Oh my,” the old woman trudged towards him, “Is she alright? She’s crying quite frightfully.”

Shota smiled awkwardly, “She was fine moments ago, but...” he trailed off, the scene of Asuka grasping onto him perfectly explaining his situation.

“Would you mind if I tried?” the old lady asked, her hands extending before he agreed. Not that he minded. Anything to calm Asuka.

It *wasn't* fine for Asuka because her crying turned up a notch, and the hold on his shirt tightened when the old lady tried to take her from him. And when she tugged the small, weightless body, Shota almost slipped his footing on the sand. He didn't know who was stronger, Asuka or the lady *trying* to help.

“Seems like she’s quite attached to you.” the lady pointed out.

He blinked. Was that meant to be a pun?

Fortunately, Asuka’s crying lessened when he initiated contact with her black fluff of hair, though the death grip was still on his shirt as her head lolled to the side once more. This time, he swallowed his amusement when she proceeded to glare at the old lady. She didn't appear to mind it, waving at Asuka with a good-natured smile before joining her husband.

He took a seat on the sand once more, settling her on his thighs before rummaging into the bag to haul out the wet tissues. “That’s one heck of a scare you gave me there,” he murmured, cleaning the tear tracks as she snuggled into his side more, her watery eyes magnifying the vibrance of her emerald orbs, and warmth bloomed in his chest, fuzzy and light as he warned of the temptation to—

No, he couldn't afford this feeling. Not when he knew the

consequences.

When he wiped the snot from her red nose, she caught his palm once more. This time, he didn't pull back.

This time, Asuka brought it closer to her cheeks, almost as if trying to hug him.

This time , Shota couldn't help but break into a smile.

*

“....You bought a cot.”

“Yes.”

Hizashi sighed, slumping on the single sofa and Kayama followed suit, taking her place on the two-seated one next to Shota who was pulling on his boots. “Am I imagining things or is this kid smiling?” Kayama queried, critically observing the child who seemed to be holding a rattle, her green eyes focused on the array of toys hanging above her.

Shota said nothing, taking his knife out of the holster as he cleaned it with a beige cloth.

“She’s not the only one in a good mood.” Hizashi enunciated, reaching for the file on the wooden table.

Shota skilfully ignored that comment as well.

“A match, huh?” Hizashi drawled, “Well, this was expected. And *look* , you went ahead and named her too.”

Shota rolled his eyes, “How else was I supposed to get her vaccinated?”

“Aizawa Asuka’s a good name.” Hizashi said instead, nodding promptly.

Kayama snorted loudly, “Yeah, thank god he didn't name her anything like ‘*Smartass*’ or ‘*Fishbait*’ or ‘*Prickface*’. Good job on the naming, Sho.”

“Smart-ass, Fishbait, and Prick face are perfectly fine names,” Shota grumbled, exiting his apartment to start his patrols.

He continued on his usual path, sticking by the shadows and maneuvering into places for crimes to likely occur. His thoughts, though, were dedicated to something else entirely. Hizashi and Kayama had taken it upon themselves to look for suitable candidates and they hadn't bought any for him yet, they were busy people too. Hizashi and Kayama ran their start-up agency with only a few people to help them. Not to mention all the extra workload they didn't *want* to quit, with Hizashi's radio show and Kayama's modeling gigs, they were buried head-deep into work.

Maybe they'd take a lot more time in finding a suitable candidate for Asuka—

“—you said you wouldn't do it!”

“And I *won't* ! I seriously won't, Miko, so come back to me, alright? I was just *really* angry then— I wasn't thinking straight, you *know* how I get when I'm angry. Just, *please* , come back, I can't cope without *you* and Aoi.”

A lover's spat, he observed. Or something more than that. He balanced on a balcony railing, watching the man and woman. The woman seemed to be on edge, her reddish-brown hair flaring at short intervals. And the man had horns sprouting from his forehead, his hands going wildly as he raved about not doing something anymore.

“You won't change.” the woman trembled out shakily, stepping back as she did so, “Time and time again, you keep saying the *same thing*, repeating the same *bullshit* about not doing it and you turn around and do the *exact* thing you *promised* not to do. I have my limits, Itone, I can't handle *you* , your *anger* , your *violence*— Aoi and I deserve better than your scum ass—”

Shota moved, hauling his capture weapon at the raised fist, and secured the man scum named Itone. “That's enough.”

“Who the fuck are you?!”

He jumped in the middle, throwing a punch that resulted in the Man scum landing on the floor. “Are you alright, Ma'am?” he questioned gently, tightening his wraps to the point where Itone started wiggling.

“A-ah, yes, I'm a-alright,” she stuttered out, “thank you for your

help.”

He nodded promptly, dialing the police with his unoccupied hand.

“Are you Miko’s new lover?! *You bitch!* I knew you were cheating on me—” and his capture weapon bound his mouth.

Later when Itone was taken away, Shota offered to escort her to the Night care she was initially going to before being held up by her ex-husband solely because the woman was still trembling.

“Um, you don’t have to walk me all the way there.” she offered shakily. Shota wondered if she was reeling from the punch she nearly received or was just naturally nervous. Probably a bit of both.

“It’s no problem,” he replied simply. And it wasn’t. He had to patrol the area anyway.

She chuckled nervously, “Then I’ll warn you, Eraserhead-san, my son’s a hero fanatic, he might just jump on you if he sees you beside me.”

He doubted that. Underground heroes were rarely someone’s favorite.

“Itone...” she started, looking straight ahead, “he’s not going to serve any jail time, is he? He always gets out on bail because of his family.”

Shota exhaled into his weapon bindings, scanning his brain for words to comfort the woman. He came up blank.

“And his family *hates* me. I don’t come from money, you know? I can’t even say meeting him was the *worst* thing that ever happened to me because Aoi wouldn’t be here if not for him—” she sniffed and Shota tensed. “ *Four years*, four years I put up with *him* , his harsh words, violent beatings, all because I *thought* that *one day* , one day he was going to change and we could be a *happy family* — then he hit Aoi for the first time and I couldn’t t-take it anymore.” She was full-on sobbing now and Shota dug into his pockets hoping something bearing semblance to a tissue would apparate. And behold, the wet tissue which wasn’t wet anymore that he had used to wipe Asuka’s snot and tears was right there, though it was a little crusty

He offered it and she took it, mumbling a short thanks.

“I’m sorry for burdening you with my problems— it sort of just spilled out. ” Alarmingly, she started to sob again. “He w-wouldn’t leave us alone that.. that a-annoying piece of shit. I can’t even do my job right,

Eraserhead-san, I can't handle people talking to me loudly, and I flinch *every time* my boss tries to relay his feedback on my reports because he uses a lot of ha-hand languages when he t-talks— and I'm so pathetic for making him feel bad, the poor man's been s-so nice to me and- and I just react l-like *that* —”

She blew her nose blaringly, “And Aoi, my baby boy, he's such a sweet thing really, h-he's the only thing that keeps me going these days and I-I can't even spend some quality time with h-him with my ex-in-laws complaining about giving his custody to them— *like hell I'm doing that!*” he was silently cheering for her at this point, “The court c-case is still on-going, and Itone's not supposed to approach me or have a-any direct contact with m-me until the final verdict is announced.”

She looked at him for the first time since she started speaking, gray eyes red from crying as her hair continued to flare at an alarming rate, “But I'm sure I'm going to win. I got lucky with a good lawyer, you see, he's handling this case pro bono, a-and I'm the happiest I've been in a long time.”

This was his cue to say something inspirational, wasn't it? What could he say? What would *Hizashi* say?— *Hizashi would sob along with her* . Then what would Kayama say? No, Kayama would be much worse. Itone might even be found with an incapacitated dick with her in the mixture.

“That is amazing, Ma'am.” he decided.

“Miko.” she said hoarsely, “Ma'am feels old.”

“Miko-san.” he corrected, “You're an amazing Okaa-san,” he added. And she *was* . To hold out for so long only to break free from those shackles because her *son* had been hurt. She was a hundred times better than *his* mother, or Asuka's mother. He unpocketed his phone and asked for her number.

“I have a good therapist and I thought you'd probably need something to help with your trauma. It's best to get it treated before it gets worse,” he explained before she could jump to conclusions.

And for a moment he thought he might've fucked up, but she *spoke* and said nothing advocating that he was a creep. “Thank you,” she said, her hair resting on her shoulder instead of aviating. “You're very kind, Eraserhead-san, I'm sure your child must be happy to have an Otou-san like you.”

He froze, *what the—*

Then he heard an onslaught of *apologies* , “—I didn't mean to come off as a creep or anything, it's just, I have a sensitive nose, and your smell is mixed with milk powder and baby cologne and I just *assumed...* ” she trailed off, looking sheepish.

“It's fine, Miko-san.” Shota said. He didn't even know he smelt like that. Was that why that cat officer stared at him like some foreign species? Still, to think someone would say he was a *good father* was alarming all the same.

She recovered sooner than he expected. “Kids are a handful, you know? My Aoi, he's so active that if I take my eyes off him for two minutes, he'd be dumping his toys in the toilet or emptying a whole bottle of detergent on the sofa.” a chuckle escaped her, and he winced. That was a shit ton of cleaning Miko-san had to commit herself to. “and when he learned how to open doors— *Kami* that child gave me so many heart attacks, I caught him leaving the house on several occasions— and there was also one time I found a packet of boneless chicken under my pillow.” her hair flared lightly and he was thinking maybe her breathing and hair were connected in some ways.

"But he's easier to handle now that he's four." a fond smile adorned her face, then she looked at him with knowing eyes, and he almost stiffened, "It gets easier with time."

Yeah, only if *he* was going to raise the kid.

But he wasn't. Someone else was.

Someone else is going to give Asuka everything like Miko-san gave Aoi.

He didn't need to reciprocate because the night care came into view, its bold letters illuminating with rainbow fairy lights. Near the glass door was a woman greeting another woman and when the former caught sight of Miko, she offered her a smile too.

“Aoi! Your Okaa-san's here!” she hollered, peering over her back, “And tell Rui-obaachan that Izuku's Okaa-san's here too!” The woman with the mighty voice turned to them once more, wearing an apologetic smile as she clutched both her hands in front of her.

“Was Aoi well-behaved?” Miko-san asked, somehow appearing even more apologetic.

“Oh yes, *absolutely* .” the woman said, then her gaze flickered to Shota behind her and beamed in a way that made chills go down his spine. “*Oh* ? Who might you be, Sir? A potential customer? Did Miko-chan tell you about this place?”

“....”

“Eraserhead-san might be a potential customer, yes,” Miko-san simpered, and he stopped himself from reeling. “Unfortunately, I didn't poach him.”

“Oh?” the woman repeated, orange eyes glinting, “A pro hero, huh? We don't get many of those around here, but you're *always* welcome! We open at six in the evening and close in the morning, and you don't have to worry about our caretakers dozing or slacking off at their jobs, they're *highly* skilled in caring for children; newborns, toddlers, and preschoolers. Here, at Tulip Night Care, we're experienced and equipped with dealing with *any* kind of child thrown our way! As for safety—”

“Mama!” a blue blur dashed out of the excessively lit establishment, crashing into Miko-san and hugging her legs, “You're late!”

Shota was just glad the advertisement was over.

“What'd I say about running, Aoi-chan?” a short woman lumbered out next, silver hair pulled back into a messy bun as it revealed her strikingly heavy-bagged eyes. She was carrying a child who was stuck at her hips, a head full of messy green hair snuggled into the junction of her neck, her gaze briefly shot to Shota before focusing on the other woman. “Sorry for the wait, Inko-chan, ‘zuku was hard to wake up.”

Inko waved it off, reaching for her kid while he readily slouched into his mother's embrace. Shota watched as she ruffled the kid's unruly hair and hugged the boy, and he watched *more* , almost a ghost smile stretching on his face as the kid hugged back despite his sleepy stature.

“A new customer?” a voice interrupted, snapping him out of his thoughts. It was the silver-haired woman speaking this time.

“Maybe,” he answered this time, Kayama and Hizashi could catch a break if he could find someone else to babysit Asuka.

Later, when he escorted both mother and son to their house, the thread in his mind that revolved around providing a ‘better’ home for

Asuka loosened imperceptibly.

*

The orange-eyed woman was named Sato Yumena and the silver-haired one was Nakamura Utano. The former one was gleaming, and the latter was more interested in Asuka who was in his arms, sucking her sky-blue pacifier while tugging at his shoulder-length hair.

“You’re one of those teenage parents, aren't ya?” Utano drawled out, metaphorically poking his eyes with the pen she was hovering over the clipboard.

Yumena stabbed an elbow into the other woman while bumbling out a sorry.

“If I am,” Shota said calmly, “would that be a problem?”

Utano snorted, evidently not affected by the brutal elbow stab he witnessed, “Course not, Hero—”

“Aizawa Shota,” he corrected, his head slightly tilted due to Asuka’s grip, “I’m off duty.”

“Well then, ‘course not, *Shota-kun*. ” she repeated mirthfully, writing down on the board without moving her charcoal orbs from him, “Do ya know how many teenage parents leave their kids ‘ere? I’ll tell ya; *more* than the married ones.”

“That’s right, we don't judge.” Yumena chuckled, “We only want your kid.”

That sounded so sinister that even Asuka’s hold on his hair seemed to loosen.

“What ‘ena means is that we want what’s *best* for the kids.” Utano rephrased, “So? Are ya in or not?” she juttied the clipboard at him, pen tapping at the place to sign.

He signed with no hesitation.

Later that afternoon when he texted Kayama and Hizashi that their services won't be needed, he received a lot more backlash than

anticipated.

*

"Sho, you *can't* keep doing this." Hizashi gritted out, hand on his hip and brows furrowed to the point that his glasses were falling off his nose.

Kayama bit her fist from laughing, the shaking of her shoulder intensifying as Shota threw another file into the three-foot pile of files.

"If they don't fit *my* criteria, then yes, I can."

Asuka's rattle echoed and Hizashi appeared close to banging his head onto the nearest pole, "And what exactly *are* your criteria?"

Shota gave him a pointed look, "You expect me to toss her back to the same hellhole she escaped from?"

"*Sho* , my dude," Hizashi cried, " *none* of these people are going to be like her shitty Okaa-san— their files made it here *because* they want a child."

"And I suppose you just want me to believe everything on these papers?"

Kayama slipped from her chair, and Hizashi turned around from his best friend's bored face to look at Asuka, his blood pressure rising at an alarming rate.

"Sho, it's been a month since 'suka-chan was left here," Kayama drawled amusedly, "you might as well admit that you don't *want* to give her up for adoption."

Shota pretended not to hear, finding the file in his hand very intriguing.

"I mean, that works too, if he's willing to admit it," Hizashi said, prodding at Asuka's cheeks. Asuka in return, swatted his hand, vehemently waving her rattle while a familiar glare settled on her face.

“The Suzuki’s look like a good candidate,” Shota pronounced, “but they already have five children so maybe not,” he murmured, hauling the file to join the others as he grabbed another from the deflated pile beside him.

Kayama snorted, “You just broke him, ‘zashi.”

*

In month four, Kayama and Hizashi sparsely brought in new candidates with the excuse of their bustling agency. And was pleasantly surprised at the news of Shota going to meet Asuka’s potential parents-to-be, so much so that they sneaked into the diner Shota was appointed to meet them with their best disguises on.

“This is a miracle.” Kayama whispered behind the menu, “It’s a fucking miracle— he’s going to part with Asuka.” eyes peaked at an unusually formally dressed Shota, face cleanly shaved and hair pulled back into a tiny ponytail.

“Wouldn’t get my hopes up if I were you,” Hizashi whispered back, miserably failing at tucking back his blonde hair into the green wig, “he might be doing this to mess with us.”

“I don’t think he’d dress up *that* nice just to mess us.”

“You underestimate his pettiness.”

Then they watch as a couple who radiated ‘elegance’ in every aspect join the table as Shota greeted them with the same sincerity.

“We’re so happy that you called, Aizawa-san, we saw Asuka-chan’s profile and were smitten.” the elegant lady gushed.

The man flashed a billion-dollar smile, “Yes, we’re so happy that you considered us worthy of parenting Asuka-chan. We won’t disappoint your trust, Aizawa-san.”

The couple’s head dipped at a neutral-faced Shota and the two friends just *knew* that something was severely wrong with the whole setting.

“Yes, before that,” Shota said, and both Kayama and Hizashi missed the next few words because a chirpy waiter barreled in front of them,

asking if they were ready to order, Kayama brushed the girl off with two simple meals of fish and chips and was *close* to using her quirk when the waiter asked for drinks.

Though when the waiter shooed away, the scene in front of them was baffling.

“You... you... you *do* realize what adoption means, right? Aizawa-san?” the woman was stuttering out, appearing quite incensed. “It means *we* are going to be Asuka-chan’s *legal* parents and you don’t have a say in how we decide to raise the child.”

“Yes, I am very much *aware* of what adoption means.” Shota drawled out, “But if you can’t accept these conditions, then I’m afraid this topic isn’t up for discussion anymore.”

“These conditions are *outrageous* .” the man seethed next. “We can’t *possibly* prevent minor injuries children are going to have during playtime, nor can we block *every* harsh thing this world has to offer—just *what* were you on when you made this contract?!”

Kayama snorted so hard that she had to look away from the man’s flaring nostrils. Hizashi’s lips stretched in a grin, throwing a *told-you-so* at Kayama as she tried to recover from her laughter.

There was *no way* Asuka was going to be adopted. No way Shota was *ever* letting her go. And the two friends were aware of that fact ever since they witnessed Shota kissing the girl’s forehead when she was sound asleep.

They still didn’t know why Shota was so insistent on finding a better home for Asuka when she was already home.

The changes in Shota were so drastic in the last few months. Not to mention the dump of an apartment he was accommodating took the most prominent blow. Every time Kayama and Hizashi came over the weekends, something new was always present in the apartment. It may be a bottle sterilizer on the kitchen counter, a bouncer chair, a stroller— heck that was *nothing* compared to the storm that conjured up in his room. A whole new wardrobe was dedicated to Asuka’s belongings, a smaller laundry basket was next to his not-so-anymore overflowing laundry basket, his dresser barely held anything other than the rare perfume he used, and the aftershave was now filled with ranges of baby cologne, baby lotion, baby oil, baby wipes, baby powder and *anything* useful for a *baby* .

The first time Kayama had got into his room to use the bathroom, she almost tripped over her feet from how *clean* it was, and only due to her bursting bladder did she prevent herself from showing Hizashi the scene right then and there. But later when she entered the spacious bathroom, she *did* slip over a yellow duck *near a damn baby bathtub*.

They watched with glimmering eyes as the elegant couple strutted out of the diner and Shota appeared relatively bland before referring to a waiter. Then he promptly stood up, walking in their direction as they both stiffened.

“If you both *ever* get a job that entails intelligence gathering, then don't accept it for the sake of our country.” Shota voiced, correspondingly loosening his tie and popping off the collar button.

Kayama licked her lips, “Can I just say that looked hot as fuck?”

Hizashi guffawed, tugging off his wig, and hauling it to the seat beside him.

Shota sighed, joining their table with an incoherent grumble.

*

On Friday noon, Shota was vacuuming the fluffy silver carpet, five-month-old Asuka was in his room, blissfully asleep, Hizashi was in the kitchen prepping for lunch, and Kayama was desperately trying to open a can from the wrong side.

When the vacuum echo stopped, Shota could hear Hizashi reprimanding the R-rated hero over having common sense, and the baby monitor grumbled, informing him that Asuka was no longer asleep.

Asuka was staring again, vastly different from before, and not at all like he was the scum of the earth. “Let's get some food in you,” he mumbled, picking her up as her head lolled on his shoulders, yawning.

“— dude! How hard is it for you to open a damn can?! You pull *this* part,” Hizashi yelled, demonstrating aggressively.

"I know how to open a damn can, you damn cockatoo!"

"Yes, because stabbing the wrong side with a fucking butter knife is the way to go!"

"You *know* I can't cook shit!"

"Damn right, you can't." Shota interrupted, evidently having enough, "So feed Asuka instead."

Hizashi snorted, "Try not to mix her formula with a butter knife." he mocked. And Kayama threw the knife at him to which Hizashi squealed, narrowly dodging it.

Then it happened.

And it happened right when Hizashi picked up his chopsticks, Kayama secured Asuka on the bouncer and took her seat, and just as Shota was done taking off his apron— a simple knock echoed is what happened.

"Who's that?" Hizashi queried.

"Better not be one of your mails," Shota grunted, eyeing Kayama for a brief moment before tossing his apron on the counter.

"Hey! I spent more time here than my house, you know?" Kayama yelled behind him.

"Yes, and that justifies why it's sent here." Hizashi mocked.

Kayama turned up her nose at him and Shota's cold voice echoed, "Why are *you* here?"

"Nice to see you still don't have manners." A woman's voice resounded.

Kayama and Hizashi threw a curious glance in the direction of the voice only to witness a woman step into the house, trying to brush past Shota, and Shota in return, jolted away from her shoulder with such contempt in his face that it was unnerving.

"So *this* is where you were living?" she asked, raising an eyebrow at the state of the house and regarding the people with a short nod. Kayama and Hizashi had no idea who she was, but she was older than them so they dipped their heads respectfully.

"How did you find this place?" Shota asked again, his hair tips flaring

despite his quirk being inactive, Hizashi and Kayama didn't think that was a good sign.

She turned to him, cool blue eyes simply blinking at the disdain directed at her, "My new job." she answered vaguely, "You never showed up at the house after graduation, Shota."

"Yeah?" Shota said, smiling wryly, "Didn't think you'd notice, *Kaa-san*."

...*damn*

"Of course, I *noticed*." she replied, appearing peeved, "Just what do you take me for?... I've been worried about you." her grip on the handbag tightened, but Shota was too incensed to notice the minuscule details.

The underground hero snorted, "I hadn't been living in that house ever since my third year. It's going to be a year now, you honestly want me to believe you're here out of *concern*?"

"Everything I've done was for *you*," she said slowly. And Shota's heart raged. She was using that tone again. That manipulative, shitty tone he despised with every inch of his life.

Yes, neglecting him for her job was for *him*. Verbally abusing him whenever she was drunk was for *him*. Telling him he shouldn't join UA, his *dream school* because it cost too much, was for *him*. Wearing the prettiest smile that made his stomach churn and imparting her words of congratulation when he got a scholarship in his second year while *indirectly* proposing that she just might make him drop out if he couldn't get the scholarship next year as well was also for *him*. Leaving mid-way through his graduation because her job was more important than her son was also for *him*.

Everything was for him .

"Don't lie. If I wanted your *concern* , I would've bothered to tell you about moving out of the house a year ago." The urge to punch something was getting increasingly potent and his heart rate wasn't calming down. He didn't want her fake concern. He wanted *nothing* to do with her. The only thing she worried about was *money* ; not her son, *never* her son.

"Shota!"

“You should leave.” he said calmly, “I don’t need your money anymore.” *Haven't needed it since I was sixteen.*

“I’m your mother!” she gritted out, her calm façade breaking.

Yet she never acted like one.

A shriek echoed, the voice coming from his daughter, her loud voice perforating everyone’s ears with such intensity, Kayama almost jumped from her seat and Hizashi flinched despite himself being half-deaf. The woman with blonde hair and blue eyes seemed startled, her gaze switching to the source of the sound, and Shota abandoned his anger, heart spiking for a child that rarely cried.

“What’s wrong with her?” Kayama asked, advancing to clip off the belt to take her out, but Asuka didn’t sit still in her hands, sobbing and attempting to push the woman’s face with her tiny fists. “Sho, I think she wants you,” Kayama said, pushing back her seat and standing up to placate Asuka.

Shota was already taking Asuka from Kayama’s hands by the time she finished her sentence, and Asuka was fisting his shirt like the day she cried on the beach, snuggling on his shoulder and babbling as if she were complaining about something. She gradually calmed down when his hand kept smoothing over her hair, and when her crying was reduced to heavy breathing, the extremely confused woman spoke.

“Who’s kid is that?” she sounded apprehensive, eyebrows furrowed to the point where her wrinkles bulged out.

Shota peered at his mother with a near smug face, “ *Mine* . Aizawa Asuka, your granddaughter. Though I’d prefer you stay away from her.”

Kayama nibbled on the slab of chicken resting on her rice, determined to blur out the drama. *But damn* was this fucking intense. Hizashi tried not to choke on his water as he took continuous sips from it, both of them were aware that Shota didn’t have the best situation at home, and that his relationship with his mother was shaky at best— what they didn’t expect was *this* . Whatever *this* was.

“You married without me knowing?!” Shota’s mother screeched, appearing frazzled.

Shota wondered if his mother had a loose screw. He was eighteen and asexual, what the fuck would he do with marriage? “No. Asuka’s the

product of a one-night stand.” he felt a fist ram into his shoulder, and Asuka glared at him.

This kid was calming him down without even trying.

Her nose flared, “A one-night stand?! Are you out of your mind?! You’re *seventeen*, Shota, what made you think having—” she exhaled, resting a hand on her chest, placating herself, “What do you do to her when you’re out on your jobs? Who takes care of her? And who’s her Okaa-san?”

Shota frowned, “Why do you want to know?”

“Shota!” she screamed, “If you’re still mad about me leaving halfway through graduation then that’s *extremely* childish of you,” she taunted, taking a couple of steps towards him while the scowl on her face deepened. “Taking care of a child is not—”

“I’m eighteen, not *seventeen*. You’re *sorely* mistaken if you think I’m angry about what happened at the graduation— *graduation* is just the tip of the iceberg” he cut in, shifting on his feet, “And Asuka’s well taken care of and doesn’t need *your* presence to make her life any better.”

The woman shook, her blonde hair flaring much like Shota’s did, except her quirk made her fury known through aviating the mug, and the flickering lamp beside her. “I am your *Okaa-san* and you *will* give me the respect I deserve.” Silver eyes glimmered instead of her blue, and Shota knew she was pissed. Not that it intimidated him anymore, but she was still using that sickly, calm, manipulative tone, and his hold on Asuka tightened.

Then the tense atmosphere broke when Asuka screamed, waving her fist at her grandmother with such vigor, emerald eyes glimmering with her usual ‘*You’re the scum of this universe*’ glare, and Shota swallowed a laugh at the monumental Look.

“Why do you feel the need to interfere in my life? Just act like you always do and ignore me.” Shota countered.

Hizashi choked on his water and Kayama slipped further down her seat.

“Who’s her Okaa-san?” she shot back instead.

Shota was concluding that nothing was going through her thick head.

“I don’t know.” he shrugged, finally answering. “Might as well be dead for all I know.” Asuka giggled at that, and he pondered whether this kid understood him.

Though that was a thought he often pondered over.

She appeared rabid by now, “How can you *possibly* raise a child without her Okaa-san?”

“Well, I didn't have the best one either, so I think my daughter will turn out just fine.”

“ *You disrespectful brat* —” she started, hair still aviating and her fair skin tinting red— “you know what? Do what you want.” she resigned, a twisted smile stretching on her face, “But I’m warning you, Shota, you’re not qualified to be a parent and that child has *no* future.”

Shota grinned his crazy grin, “I’ll take you up on that challenge.”

Both Hizashi and Kayama *wheezed* at the confirmation without regard to Shota’s crazy mother. Out of *all* the ways to confirm that he was going to raise Asuka, it had to be a challenge to his mother. Comical.

They watched as she huffed and twirled around, strutting out the door with her hair tips still flailing. Upon her disappearance out the door, the floating mug crashed to the ground, Hizashi and Kayama were still cackling and Shota, well, he felt a weight evaporate from his chest.

He was going to raise Asuka.

Him.


And that thought didn't seem as daunting as it did five months ago.

Chapter End Notes

Keep in mind he’s eighteen so his behavior and personality may vary. I took the realistic approach because as much as thirty-one year old Aizawa wouldn't hesitate to adopt a child (probably), I think eighteen year old Aizawa would differ in that approach.

It's just my opinion though.

Positive criticism is always welcome. Also, sorry for the typos in advance. And the late, sporadic updates.

Hope this chapter was a good read 

List of OC's for this chapter:

Miko-san- Mother, customer at nightcare

Aoi- Miko's son

Itone- scum bag ex-husband

Nakamura Utano- night care worker

Sato Yumena- night care worker

A brewing storm

Chapter Summary

Sakura hates this world, until she doesn't.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Sakura had many regrets in life. So many that she ran out of fingers to count.

But killing herself wasn't one of them.

Not paying enough attention to her development as a ninja till the mission to Wave fucked up was regrettable. Her weakness in the chunin exams was regrettable. Begging Sasuke to stay instead of knocking him unconscious was regrettable. Being a complete bitch to Naruto was regrettable. Stupidly pining after the guy who had tried to kill her was regrettable. Allowing Chiyo Baa-san to die was regrettable. Not being there—the point was, her regrets stacked up to match the Hokage monument and she hated it.

So when Madara initiated the Infinite Tsukuyomi right after tossing Naruto's lifeless body next to Kakashi's decapitated foot, Sakura knew all hope was lost.

When the damnable tree sprouted, sending tremors through the ground and evoking helpless cries from all around, Sakura grabbed her kunai.

And when the flower flourished and the light shone, Sakura pierced her heart with no hesitation.

After all, dying was better than a false reality.

Compared to what her heart was going through before witnessing everyone get maimed, the pain she suffered was a prickle from a

needle.

So when she crashed on the rock-hard ground, her forehead meeting with a gnarly root, she didn't regret it one bit.

*

Sakura wondered if this was the afterlife. Because the afterlife was extremely comfortable. It was like swimming in warm jello and not drowning, it was like sleeping till afternoon and waking up fully energized, except she wasn't waking, just floating in never-ending darkness that didn't seem a least bit daunting. And it made her happy. Exceedingly happy. Because if this was the afterlife, then her friends, her mentors, and her parents were all going through this, and they were all going to be happy.

But her happiness was short-lived.

Either afterlife was shoving her to some kind of purgatory or tossing her to hell for killing herself, but the afterlife was suffocating her, the space around wasn't jelly anymore, it was warm, but it still wasn't jelly, and she was suffocating. Then the afterlife seemed too real because now something was touching her fucking head and god damnit she was thinking this wasn't the afterlife after all. Not a beat later, there was light, and she might've thought she was in heaven if not for something screaming—

'It's a girl!'

And suddenly, even though Sakura was suffocating two minutes ago, her mouth involuntarily gaping while producing sounds that made her throat itch, even when her sight was providing a vague picture of blurs of green and white, even then she understood. She understood that she was just pushed out of her mother, and not in her warm jello of the afterlife.

Now, Sakura was fine with rebirth. It wouldn't necessarily be her first choice, but it wasn't the worst one either, however, after three days into entering this exceedingly unfamiliar world, she was changing her stance on it being 'not the worst one

The reason for it? Her satanic mother.

The woman was a fucking menace, and her list of bad traits was only starting.

Sakura loved her name, she really did, and didn't necessarily think her name would be the same. She wasn't expecting to be named "*Minikui*", Watanabe Minikui.

Her mother named her name *Ugly* and she couldn't stop her annoying tear ducts from bursting at that revelation while her devil mother seemed to be cackling at the birth certificate. Heck, even the nurses appeared sympathetic to her.

That was only the start of her hell. Soon after the discharge, Sakura experienced *real* hell.

It was hunger. Baby hunger.

She was a medic-nin in her previous life, and maternal and baby care was knowledge she was immensely familiar with. Newborns were supposed to be fed every two-three hours, and Sakura was being fed every time her voice turned hoarse from crying. Her hygiene was shit with her nappy being changed not-so-frequently, and Sakura could recall the amount of time she swam in her vomit.

Her mother was negligent, and irresponsible, and probably didn't want her due to the number of times she had said it to her face.

Even though she didn't want to admit it, her heart prickled with her scathing words. And most of the time, she was left to her thoughts, the echoes of her mother's taunts swirling in her mind and imprinting in her bones, staring at the chipping ceiling, pretending her stomach wasn't eating itself.

Her breath hitched, and her eyes heavied, hands slipping from her empty belly to the yellowed bed sheet of the cot. Her only thought before losing consciousness was what a shitty death this was.

*

Contrary to her previous assumption, she woke up very much alive. It smelt much cleaner too, and this was *not* her cot.

Soon after her eyes focused on a blue-haired nurse, and Sakura had a vague idea of why she was here again.

“— This is *ridiculous!* You can’t just assume I’m neglecting my child, is it my fault she refuses to drink from me?!”

“Watanabe-san, your child isn't only diagnosed with malnutrition, she is suffering from a severe infection that may have cost her life if you had brought her any later. Do you seriously want me to believe that you didn't notice such prominent changes in your daughter’s health?” Another voice made it into her ear. Sakura would’ve laughed if not for the sluggishness she was experiencing. “If your daughter was refusing to drink milk, you should’ve brought her in sooner, she’s practically bones. Watanabe-san, do you expect me to believe this isn't the cause of neglect?”

“You.. you, is this how you speak to the people paying you?!” her mother’s rabid voice echoed, “I’m a teenage mother for god's sake! What do you want me to do when my daughter stops sucking milk?! Heck even I feel like not eating at times, why can’t a baby feel the same? I didn't think she’d be burning up like that when... when...” sobs echoed, stabbing into her sensitive ears.

Sakura couldn't help but ponder whether this doctor would believe such a stupid reason.

He did. Because the next day she was nestled in her mother’s arms, suckling milk without her imp of a mother screeching about how her breasts were going to resemble prunes or unstable threats like she was going to flush her down the toilet one of these days because of how

shittily odoured she was. (and who's fault was that?!) Though Sakura had a hunch that the sole reason her deranged mother with a clogged brain wasn't verbally abusing her was that there was a nurse in the room right next to her, guiding her on the 'correct' ways to hold a child while her mother reciprocated in a way that nearly made her vomit the precious nutrients in her stomach.

Either way, her life was much better than when she was stuck in that filthy cot. Her mother wasn't nearly around as much because of her 'job' and the nurses were providing her with pre-pumped milk every two hours. She was bathed daily and cleaned when she shat. And for the first time, saw her reflection when the blue-haired nurse took her bathing. Normally, she was bathed in the room with the heater in full swing, but that day the nurse filled a huge tub of water in the bathroom.

One thing was sure though, she didn't resemble her mother in the least. Her mother had mousy brown hair, shimmering gold eyes, and a mole under her right eye. Her smile was pretty when she wasn't actively patronizing her, and her lips were brown, probably from all the smoking she did. Her ivory complexion was the only trait Sakura could match, but everything else was practically non-existent. The charcoal hair, and green eyes, made Sakura consider, what part of her was ugly enough to be named ugly?!

Then again, her mother was one petty bitch.

*

Chakra was weird in this world. And that was something she caught on as soon as she touched her should've-been-named-Kijo mother, the nurse, the doctor checking her on her vitals, and the little boy who found babies adorable, subsequently wanting to cuddle them, and it just so happened that Sakura was being transferred to her room right after a blood test.

Her mother's chakra was focused on the layer of her skin, the nurse had a good concentration of it near her brain, the doctor's chakra was

purple and volatile, and the boy had the most minuscule accumulation of chakra in the core where chakra usually resided.

And as if the distribution of chakra wasn't peculiar enough, the people in this world who she had by far, actually seen with her own two not-so-ugly eyes, were bizarre too. Some people had horns, others had wings, and she had positively shit herself when the lion-headed nurse admittedly spoke, a range of people didn't have normal skin color, and a minority of them essentially didn't even appear human; it seemed like all of them were high on Orochimaru's curse seal, but they weren't. The curse seal standardly stood out on the neck and she had spotted none so far. Then there was also the other telling symptom she had gauged out from the people who she had had contact with so far; their chakra was far from sinister.

They had unique abilities too. The doctor's assistant nurse who she unfortunately couldn't touch was sprouting rattles from her palms. Another guy in the lounge performed a neat fire jutsu without any hand signs to entertain the surrounding kids before a nurse started scolding him about 'illegal quirk usage'. That's when she figured out that unique abilities were called quirks and everyone had them.

Though her excitement at that discovery was short-lived when the blue-haired nurse whom everyone referred to her as Kayano-chan brought her back to her room and started relaying information she didn't want to hear.

"You'll be going home soon, Mini-chan." Sakura felt bile rise in her throat, unconsciously snuggling into the nurse and producing something which could resemble a whimper. "Oh dear, are you feeling sick again?" the nurse initiated to smooth over back and she felt herself relax considerably despite her impending doom. "Your Okaa-san came in last night when you were sleeping, she seemed exhausted." Sakura wanted to flip the finger, she wouldn't care if the woman jumped off a cliff. "Asked about how you were doing while feeding you, it was quite endearing to see." Kayano gushed.

Sakura wanted to scream, but she was more mature than that.

Kayano hummed gently while placing Sakura in her cot, dimming the lights before leaving, Sakura had an astronomical urge to crawl out of the cot and run the fuck away. But she chose against doing something that contradicted her current limbs, instead, she meditated to get her mediocre chakra pool to deepen.

It was the most she could right now to get out her of mother's clutches.

*

Sakura was astounded. Fucking bamboozled if she was being honest. And it wasn't the kind of surprise people had at discovering that they had a secret birthday party planned. It was the kind where she found out that Naruto was the fourth Hokage's son, Sasuke's maniacal brother was an astoundingly pretty man, and Kakashi was also unexpectedly nice-looking under the mask he wore— the point was, if it was the previous her with her previous body, she'd be screeching for the world to hear.

"What? Are you surprised? I'm a pretty nice mama, aren't I?" her mother's eerily cheerful voice echoed in the car. "Don't worry, My mush-face, I'm certain he's your papa. Your mama has near-perfect memory, you know? Even if I'm a high school dropout, I used to come at the top of my class!" she simpered, nastily appealing despite Sakura wanting to believe otherwise.

"I even got you a new blanky to commemorate our farewell." she continued to speak, and Sakura continued to stare at the woman, wondering which loony-bin she escaped from to do *this* . To quite literally put her in a fucking basket and toss her to her father— wouldn't an orphanage be a better choice? Hmm?

"Your shirt might be a little stained, but that's the only one I washed. You don't have to worry, your papa's quite rich. I think." she *thinks* — oh god, she just might cry at this rate. "I mean he was a hero-in-training from that prestigious school so he should earn something, right? And his apartment's in an okay place in Mustafa, don't worry kiddo, he was a huge softy when I met him."

Yes and that was supposed to be reassuring, wasn't it? And the fact that this Demoness in human skin kept repeating 'don't worry' was already a valid reason to scream Bloody Mary. And what was *hero-in-training* ? Was that the ninja academy here?

The car came to an abrupt halt. Sakura was close to throwing hands at the pure bliss displayed on her mother's face.

Her mother exited first, opening the passenger seat to haul out the basket she was residing in with one hand without bothering to support the bottom— yes, who'd care if her hand slipped, or the damn handle broke, or if her head hit the inviting pavement and died, right?— Sakura experienced swaying, and she might have dismissed that motion for casual swaying if not for the slight nudge in her head indicating that there was genjutsu in place.

Her gaze peered over at her mother, but she was nowhere in sight. And for the first time since coming to this world, she realized that her mother might have a brain in that head after all.

Her mother's 'quirk' was invisibility. How convenient for this very endeavor. By the looks of it, the basket she was holding and Sakura herself was affected by this too, hence, the people on the sidewalk going about their day without so much of a glance at her.

Slight tremors rumbled as her mother climbed a set of stairs, her breathing labored, clearly tired from the way she was hauling the basket with two hands now. Sakura produced an involuntary whimper when her mother placed— *dropped* the basket in the front where she presumed to be her supposed father's door.

Her mother's evil gold eyes came into view once more, practically incandescent with a smile tugging till her forehead. "You alright there Mush-face? Sorry for the harsh landing." Sakura would've reeled from the oncoming touch if she could, but she couldn't, so her mother was ruffling her precious black hair, "I guess this is goodbye. Behave for your papa, alright? No crying too much either, that shit is annoying —" this utter shit of a woman—

"Can't say I'll miss you though, but I'm sorry for the nasty name I gave you, that was payback for the pain you put me through— what? Don't glare at me like that, have you ever tried pushing a child out of your body? No? Didn't think so." Then uncharacteristically, she sighed, "Your papa's going to rename you, so don't worry about that too much, alright?"

Sakura squeaked out of pure indignation when the devil incarnate put her unstable melanin-containing muscles and tissues commonly referred to as 'lips' on her just-started fat-gaining cheek.

"What? You're disgusted by your own mama's kiss?" she asked,

quirking an eyebrow.

Sakura hoped she was wearing her most discontent face ever.

Her demented mother thought otherwise. “Aw, you’re sad about me goin’, is that it?”

Kami this woman was taking idiocracy to new levels.

“Sorry hun, you're just too much work for me. I have awesome tits because of you, but that’s about the only plus from having you, everything else was *blah* .” The devil trotted away after that, waving one last goodbye, initiating her invisibility once more.

For the longest time after that, Sakura stared at the not-so-chipped ceiling, wondering what type of person her father would be. She didn't want to take anything that woman gave her at face value, but it wasn't like she had any other source of information. If her father had supposedly graduated from being a hero-in-training, whatever the hell that was supposed to be, and was a much nicer person than her mother, then that was supposed to be better, right?

....right?

Yeah, she wouldn't count on it. Whatever happened, she was going to fend for herself as soon as she could start walking— of course, that was assuming she’d be alive by that time.

*

Sakura didn't know when she dozed off, but when she woke up, the ceiling had changed. Or more like the ceiling was still white, but that warm lighted bulb-shaped bizarre octagon certainly wasn't there. Then there were footsteps echoing and she had a vague idea of where she was.

A head appeared soon after, grey eyes observing her critically, shaggy black hair brushing against his unshaven face.

“Don't cry,”

Sakura was tempted to cry just to spite him. Why shouldn't she cry? After all the bullshit she was dragged through after entering this world, she had the right to cry. She didn't cry enough— she should raise hell for being treated this way!

But she held it in, shoved it to the depths of her gut, she had to figure out what kind of person this father of hers was before doing anything. And it was glaringly clear in the way he kept staring at her that he was confused as shit.

A knock echoed soon after his statement of ordering her not to cry.

“What's up with your face, Sho?” Well, she'd agree with that, he should shave if he didn't want to be mistaken for a thirty-four-year-old man experiencing a midlife crisis. Though something in those few minutes of purely staring at each other told her that he wasn't one to care about such mundane things.

“What emergency could you possibly have that we had to meet before Friday?” Oh? She was considered an emergency? How sweet. In the Watanabe residence, she was considered the last priority. What an upgrade.

“Some woman left a baby outside my door and I have no idea what to do with it.”

How about taking care of her for a change? Didn't that just sound completely natural? To take care of the child you fucking dodo heads procreated, wow, what a confusing thought. He should just go on a self-discovering journey to find out his purpose in life, maybe somewhere along the way, he'd get the gist of what taking responsibility meant. At least one of the two lovebirds should know, right? Since the female love bird had no comprehension of that specific word or any other word that was related to human compassion for that matter.

A pair of light eyes peeked at her and she blinked. A finger prodded Sakura's fisted hands and she executed the same routine whenever she touched someone; she followed their chakra pathways.

To her slight bewilderment, this woman seemed to have the same lining of chakra as her mother did, except her epidermis was brimming with a higher concentration than her mothers did and Sakura pondered as to whether this woman had an invisibility 'quirk'

too.

“— Dear Shota, I don't know if you remember me, but I'm the girl who you shared your sob story with and later ended up fucking — holy cow — Sho, what the fuck am I reading?!”

Those words made her concentration sloppy and Sakura didn't reel at the eloquence executed by her mother, but she certainly felt gravity tilt before a grating shriek entered her ears. Next thing she knew she was being scooped by her father and the woman was crouching on the ground, securing a basket which didn't hold her.

Nice.

*

Sakura could affirm one thing; her father's friends were the most sensible people she had met ever since coming into this world.

Sakura had believed at one point that this man might not even be her father, but after hearing stories from both sides, she decided that this 'Shota' dude might be the real deal. They certainly had the same hair, didn't they?— well, not only that but her mother's version of the story she recited during the lovely car ride they had checked out too, so there was that.

And the little speech the blonde guy named Hizashi gave? Spectacular. His conclusion left nothing to be desired. It was irresponsible of them to bring her into this world in the first place, she'd have liked to very much just die in peace. But that didn't happen and now she was suffering the astronomical repercussions by being used as a ball to play toss. If her parents weren't capable of looking after her, that was fine, sort of, the focal point was, what Sakura needed was nurturing till she was old enough to walk and talk, and getting adopted seemed delectable.

It was even better than being hauled off to an orphanage.

So obviously, it didn't peeve Sakura that her father had answered 'no'

to the capability question due to the nature of the answer being so glaringly transparent.

Though when her father had left the house sometime after that, she'd admit that his smell of fabric softener was more comforting than the Kayama woman's overly sweet perfume.

*

Sakura was still a seventeen-year-old teenager at heart, so the prospect of getting her diaper changed by a male was daunting— no, just plain embarrassing.

She wondered whether this was punishment for killing herself.

It must be. It really must be.

Her father and his friends were nice people. Like Kayano the nurse and the doctor with volatile purple chakra, they were acceptable people. They didn't starve her till she cried but gave her a bottle when she made the right face. They changed her diapers without waiting for hours to do so, Kayama even cleaned the short spurt of vomit Sakura involuntarily spat out on her unusually thin dress without letting her hear a thousand words of complaints. And Hizashi's comfortable hold on her while feeding her a bottle and the consistent strings of insults he hurled out his mouth for her mother were music to her ears.

While she suckled on a nice, warm bottle given to her, Sakura wondered if her father had a doujutsu. He had an unusually dense amount of chakra circulating his eyes, not to mention how dry and red they appeared. Hizashi's chakra density was placed in his throat and Sakura could figure out what that meant already.

This world had an interesting dynamic around the chakra. And being the absolute nerd she was, it intrigued her. So one of the first things she did was get a handle on her chakra workings, tugging it from her core and coursing it through her nerves and veins to test just how well she could articulate it. She'd admit the pride she felt when she got the hang of it the first few tries, chakra control was her best feat after all.

Admittedly, trying the body scan was a little tricky since, well, she was a *baby* . Sakura didn't want to exhaust herself by trying the mystic palm, despite that, it didn't stop her from gathering chakra to her forehead. If she could get a head start on the byakugou seal, then she'd do so without hesitation. Since being a baby meant she had all the free time in the world, she spent a good amount of time meditating— and more often than not, slumbered away while trying to do so.

That night, when Hizashi returned to his own home before Kayama was tossed over his shoulders like a sack of potatoes, Sakura was carried back to her father's room and placed in the weirdly barricaded bed. Sakura didn't think he slept with all the staring she felt aimed at her, though clad in her new green onesie, wrapped in her cat-eared blanket, she dozed off pretty soon.

*

Aizawa Asuka.

Aizawa Asuka.

Aizawa Asuka.

She wasn't Haruno Sakura since she died, named the horrific name Watanabe Minikui at the get-go. Now she was Aizawa Asuka.

She loved her new name. Aizawa Asuka.

Suffice to say, her initial dislike for him had tilted to neutral. He named the first thing that popped into his head and named her Asuka. That was a beautiful name. Then again, anything was better than *Minikui* .

Later her father heaved her around in the carrier, got her second shot of vaccines, and ended up being reprimanded for her lacking health, which honestly wasn't his fault. She had only recovered from the malnutrition and infection she suffered two days back. He didn't have any way of knowing that. Though he did grumble about why she was

so light when a two-month-old child should on average weigh over five kilograms— which came as a surprise to her, she quickly caught on that he had ‘searched it up’ on the metal box the people of this world generally used. What a fantastic invention.

When they later exited the hospital, Sakura— *Asuka* has the opportunity to look around *leisurely* for the first time. And she didn't know sightseeing could be this much fun, there was so much to observe and absorb from here; the ground which wasn't covered with sand or mud, huge buildings that appeared like severely modified versions of the Hokage tower, unique people, the intersection next to an odd metal barricade which had metal boxes that zoomed from one side to the other, most of which she had to force chakra into her eyes to see because current eyes were terribly out of focus.

All of a sudden, she spotted something- *someone* . A man clad in ninja attire, a belt that may or may not have his weapons supporting behind his back, a navy mask- Kakashi wore a mask, a fashionable scarf- like Konohamaru's.

A shinobi!

Laughter bubbled up her throat without even meaning to, making her hands move in that direction, and she couldn't even find it in herself to be embarrassed.

Suddenly, Sa— Asuka liked her father because he was walking up to the ninja man who screamed home, calling him something along the lines of Shinya, but Asuka was too hyped, so deep in her jubilation that she grabbed the scarf and tugged it.

“Your sister?”

She wouldn't have cared if her father agreed.

“Daughter, actually.”

Or so she thought.

Something warm bloomed in her chest. Something she hadn't had the liberty of experiencing ever since being quite literally shoved into this world. *Daughter* . When was the last time she heard that? And with such confidence too. *Daughter* . As if he was proud of having her. *Daughter* . All her mother referred to her as ‘Mush-face’ or something incredibly insulting and unfitting to call a child, it was never even by the horrific name she graced herself with.

My daughter . A phrase her mother hadn't ever used.

Or maybe she was reading too deep into it.

“She's...cute.” Damn right, she was.

“Well, I won’t be taking too much of your time since you're on patrol, but can you take a picture with her? She seems to like you. Or your costume. Whichever.” Asuka felt herself being pulled out of the carrier, away from the warmth her father provided and to the man she symbolized as home. “Watch out for the head.” her hand made contact with a gloved one, and for once, she didn't send a stream of chakra to analyze the nature of their chakra, instead, she let herself relax, staring at the modified metal box which could take real-time pictures too.

*

A beach. They didn't have such views in Konoha, the most she witnessed of the sea was in the land of Waves, and even then, she didn't have much time to appreciate the beauty of it due to the obvious threat of Zabuza the demon-of-something she didn't recall and Haku the androgynous beauty attempting to murder their client.

So there she sat, tucked in her father’s arm, observing the sea glimmering with the setting sun. It was ethereal. Sunsets always were.

“You don't seem like a normal baby.”

Sa— Asuka would snort if she could, but she couldn't, so she managed a smile. Of course, she wasn't a normal baby. Normal babies didn't have memories of their past life. Normal babies didn't think of the amniotic fluid as a warm jello. Normal babies didn't curse their mothers till the kingdom come.

“Look, Asuka, I know you won’t remember or process anything I’m going to say, but this probably will be the only time I can spend time with you before you're sent off to a ‘better’ home.” she blinked, he sure said the word ‘*better*’ like it was sour milk.

Head unconsciously lolling to one side, S— Asuka observed his tired face, slipping off completely as his warm hand rested on her hair. “I’m eighteen. And turning nineteen this year. And as harsh as this sounds, you were a mistake.” he caressed her hair as if he didn’t call her existence a mistake, which she didn’t mind because it was true. S— Asuka was never supposed to be here. Asuka was supposed to be dead; either in hell or purgatory or wherever the hell she was supposed to belong.

A smile tugged at her father’s lips. It wasn’t an amusing one. “But still, I’d like to apologize. You didn’t ask to be born, and you didn’t have a choice in getting such a devilishly irresponsible mama or a severely under-qualified papa.” he traced the lining of her brows and brushed the hair on her forehead with his thumb, and she experienced the same warmth she felt from when he called her my daughter. “I’m sorry, Asuka. I’m sorry that you have terrible parents. But you deserve better, and that’s why we’re putting you up for adoption.”

An apology. It wasn’t like the sympathetic apology Asuka received from the nurses when her mother named her ‘Minikui’. It wasn’t like the pained apology she got from Kayano when the older woman hugged her shaking body and whispered words of comfort. It wasn’t like her mother’s apology that held no real feelings behind it as she sauntered off, leaving her at her father’s doorstep; abandoning her at only two months.

This apology was different, this was because he somehow understood that she didn’t want to be here, although both of them had extremely contrasting reasons for it. But he apologized. He said sorry on behalf of her mother whom she’d never forgive. Sorry to his incompetence, one which, as shallow as she was going to sound, didn’t mind forgiving.

He was late, but he didn’t neglect her, didn’t shy away from learning about basic knowledge just to cater to her, and didn’t hesitate to clean her despite her furious noncompliance. Grumbled and moaned in the dead of the night when she kicked him in the ribs because she was hungry, feeding her without singing out insults. He let her touch and experience a piece of home. *He called her his daughter.*

And he gave her her name. *Aizawa Asuka.*

“Don’t worry about being hauled off to another dump. I’ll make sure to review the list of guardians myself. It’s the least I could do for leaving you with your mama for two months.” Asuka’s fingers

clamped around the side of her soon-to-be, not father's palm, and he smiled amusedly. It was her way of saying I like you, even if he probably didn't get her meaning.

He showed her kindness, kindness different coming from a parent than a stranger. Kindness was foreign when she was in her mother's residence, stuck in her filthy cot, wondering how she was going to manage to choke out a cry of hunger. And suddenly, the fuzziness of her chest intensified, the need to relay her words heightened, and her vision blurred.

“—are you going to cry?!”

She wasn't *crying* .

Then he started mumbling too many *sorry's* , the string snapping when he pulled his hand away from her, causing the dam to burst open. All the negativity. All the bitterness. All the lingering feelings from the abuse. Everything poured out and she couldn't stop the loud screech from erupting. Her fist secured on her father's shirt, burying into his side, trying to muffle her cry.

She felt him tug her, but Asuka was unrelenting in her previous life, she wasn't any different now, couldn't he just let this be an endearing moment? Why didn't he understand that she wasn't crying because she was sad— these were happy tears!

“Asuka, please stop crying... I .. will do anything just stop crying, *please* .”

She wanted to convey that baby emotions didn't work like that, but what stumbled out was another scream, and the next thing she knew someone was trying to tug her off her father and she felt rabid. Sniffing furiously, she peered at the lady who had tried to snatch and almost instantly regretted it at the good-natured smile the old lady was gracing her with.

There was movement for a while as Asuka stared off into the beach, her crying had long ceased, but her breathing was still unstable. Asuka should've been embarrassed, but she couldn't bring herself to care.

“That's one heck of a scare you gave me there...” she heard her father murmur, simultaneously wiping off the tears and snot from her face.

Yeah, well, it wasn't planned.

When his hands hovered over her nose for the second time, Asuka grabbed his hand with all the baby strength she had and crushed it against her cheek.

It was an attempted hug from her. One last goodbye before their departure.

Asuka witnessed a smile. A genuine smile, and she had a feeling he didn't do that a lot.

*

On a Thursday evening, Asuka let herself obediently slip into the light gray onesie her father was dressing her in while he muttered something about damn Hiyashi's and their bad timing, and his incoherent grumbles wouldn't have been odd if he hadn't resembled a whole new man.

No beard. Smooth, non-oily face, hair pulled back to show his somewhat predictable handsome face, hell he even smelt different. His clothes were odd too, not his usual black get-up; a crisp white shirt tucked into black slacks. Both of which Asuka witnessed him ironing furiously, and he also wore something called a tie, it seemed sort of like a leash, but she didn't think he'd let anyone pull him around.

Two months into her father's humble abode, Asuka wasn't sure she was going to get adopted. Kayama and Hizashi seemed adamant about that fact, and Asuka was starting to believe it too.

Either way, she didn't think she'd mind.

She fisted the back of his shirt on impulse when he picked her up from the bed, then watched him silently as he grabbed her baby bag and stuffed a file under his armpit in the same hand. "I have the midnight shift tonight, so behave at the night care, alright?"

Asuka regarded him with a bored gaze, how many times did he have to remind her to behave? She was mentally seventeen damnit!

“Don't stare at me like that.” her probably continue-going-to-be father said, “I’ve heard of all the mischief you get up to.” Asuka attempted a scow and her father shook his head, closing the apartment door behind him.

She bathed in the coos of admiration and awe sent her way while her father shifted uneasily. Understandable considering this was vastly different from the usual reaction she got when she ventured out with her father, mostly, it was just old ladies waving at her or her mother’s crooning at how much of an adorable daughter her father had. Today, much younger women were hitting on her father, even slithering their hands up to her precious cheeks to squeeze them, to which swatted at them with her four-month-old hand.

“Sorry, she’s a bit cranky today.” her father apologized to the third woman who tried to do so, and she even played the part by inflating her cheeks and reddening her face. The Hobo look on her father was much better than this. Whatever this was.

Who was he even trying to impress?

Later when the Night Care came into view, Asuka spotted Yumena greeting the parents and almost chortled at her questioning whether they were new customers while wearing the most befuddled face, switching her gaze between a familiar baby and an unfamiliar parent.

“No way, *you’re* Shota-kun?” Yumena asked, confirming what she saw.

“Hohohoho,” Sasaki Akane, another night care worker who was just leaving the establishment after her shift guffawed, “you sure clean up good, Shota-kun!”

Asuka found her peculiar laugh more entertaining.

“What’s all the fuss? Yumena, you’re needed at the play area, Chitose-chan vomited all over the mat and Bunko-kun needs help with— holy diapers,” Utano stepped out, eyes taking in the rare sight. Though she recovered quickly enough, “Shota-kun, ya got a date or somethin’?”

Her father appeared jaded, wordlessly handing over the baby bag to Yumena and herself to Utano. “I’ll come by in the morning,” he stated simply. And she watched him almost trip over his feet when Utano wolf-whistled, laughter bubbling when Akane started her outlandish laughter once more.

Yumeno carried her inside, still cackling at the scene of her typically unruffled father tripping over his feet, "Your papa's a funny one." she said, placing her down on the barricaded side of the common area.

Asuka hated the barricade. It prevented her from utilizing her body scans because all kids on the barricaded side were mindless, saliva-slobbering babies who all had the same chakra core. She wanted to venture over to the big kid's side to test out the kids that frequently got scolded for using their 'quirks'.

She wanted to get a better grasp on this world, and the only place she could do that was *here*, where there were plenty of people she could come into contact with. The caretakers here were particularly fascinating. Yumena for example, was brimming with chakra at her fingers, and Utano had a crazy amount stuffed up her brain and nowhere else. As for Akane with the funny laugh, Asuka didn't need to run a scan to know that she was an animal type, the woman had bunny ears for show. Bunko, the only male caretaker of this establishment, had saffron-tinted chakra. And there were a few more caretakers that Asuka had seen and never had the opportunity to touch because they focused more on the bigger kids.

Though that didn't mean Asuka didn't try to get in proximity to them.

She may have once or twice used her growing physique to climb over the barrier, which wasn't spectacularly hard when there was some kid named Izuku being a total stepping stone for her when she needed a lift. All the kid did was stay in his corner and built up stacks of blocks. Asuka wouldn't have noticed him if he hadn't happened to be near the barricade— which he was— so she took full advantage of that by latching onto the bars of the accursed barricade and supporting her wobbly feet at the other kid's shoulder, whom by her fifth attempt had already caught onto what she was trying to do and fully supported her.

But that was all yesterday.

She wouldn't attempt another escapade so soon. Not when Utano had peeked over the barricaded corner for the sixth time since she had been dropped here.

Inspections had to wait till she was off the radar. Maybe she'll wait a week before attempting another one. For now, she'd join Izuku on his boring venture of building blocks.

Then as she turned to strenuously crawl towards her helpful friend,

someone was tugging at her perfectly brushed twin tails. Asuka's attention snapped to a red-haired kid who had a square for a nose—how the hell did he breathe?

No kid on the barricaded side spoke fluently, but Asuka knew what this meant.

It meant war.

*

There was something comforting about sleeping without being disturbed. No missions, no hospital shifts, no war, no nothing that was in immediate need of attention. So when she woke up to that horrendous sound of a sliding, moaning machine called 'vacuum' that worked better than a standard broom, Asuka felt well rested.

Her sluggish head was against her father's shoulder when Hizashi's usual voice entered her ears, "— dude! How hard is it for you to open a damn can?! You pull *this* part!"

"I know how to open a damn can, you damn cockatoo!" and it made sense that Kayama was here too. This trio was like every other Konoha eleven genin group excluding team seven; they were practically inseparable.

"Yes, because stabbing the wrong side with a fucking butter knife is the way to go!"

"You know I can't cook shit!"

"Damn right you can't." her father interrupted, evidently having enough, "So feed Asuka instead."

Asuka felt the woman's boob before anything else, "Come 'suka-chan, let's get some food into you~" Kayama sang, shaking the bottle while rubbing her head against her like a cat. Kayama always did that.

When the teat met her lips, Kayama went into her usual streak of

retelling her awesome hero adventures. “I got something special for today,” she grinned, her blue eyes glimmering, “so, I was doing my usual patrol near the mall, and since I’m so captivating, I had this teenage boy come up to me for an autograph— now normally I’m not one for clout—”

“Bullshit. Your merch is the best-selling among the female heroes, how *dare* you lie to a baby?” Hizashi enunciated tauntingly.

Then the story deviated into a full-blown argument with Hizashi and Asuka sucked on the bottle without care.

Her father was a hero. So was Hizashi and Kayama. Hero’s were much like ninjas, she figured. They worked for the well-being of their country, protected the civilians, did patrols, and hunted down the bad guys (like in the Bingo book); it was the same thing with different titles, abilities, and uniforms.

She found Kayama’s costume particularly confusing for the first month of her arrival here, but after Kayama had retold a story of saving a five-year girl from a hostage situation by tearing her sleeves, Asuka somewhat understood what her special ability entailed; her skin emitted sleeping gas, it seemed, and the costume was solely for matching her personality more than her quirk because Kayama didn't need to tear her clothes a week ago to put a rabid Hizashi to sleep right after she had finished inhaling the box of sweet and sour fried chicken he bought.

Hizashi’s quirk and costume somehow weren't confusing at all. His personality and ability went hand in hand. Though she seriously questioned that styled hair of his.

Both Kayama and Hizashi were also Daylight heroes, and that term wasn't hard to decipher when her father never once went outside with his array of strange ropes during the day. She would’ve thought that the other term would be Nightlight heroes, or Moon-rising heroes, or Evening heroes, but Underground heroes worked well too.

Asuka pretty soon unriddled the doujutsu her father had, and she didn't need a great deal of effort or eavesdropping to fill in the blanks when he was using it on Hizashi’s ascending voice right now. He used it on Hizashi a boatload of times.

An ability to nullify other abilities was pretty awesome, but the drawbacks from it were equally draining. It was the same for others too. Her father had red, dry eyes, which Asuka knew wasn't only

dedicated to his quirk. Hizashi was partially deaf, which was also given considering how blaringly loud he was. Kayama had to prioritize her hygiene over anything or it appeared her quirk lost its effectiveness. And all those were prized information she gained with little to no effort whatsoever. People tended to let their guard down in front of babies.

Before she knew it, Kayama pulled out the empty bottle in her hands with an annoyed huff, strutting over to the kitchen to leave it near the sink, not-so accidentally stepping on Hizashi's foot on the way out. Hizashi only squawked, avoiding his limbs from flapping at Kayama solely because— "Your lucky 'suka-chan's with you!"

Two minutes later Kayama was stuffing her into a comfy bouncer seat so that the 'adults' could eat. Two seconds later there was a knock on the door. One second later her father appeared feral.

"Why are *you* here?"

"Nice to know you still don't have manners."

Asuka didn't have to touch him to know that his chakra levels were spiking. Even now, his hair tips were doing the talking, incensed gray eyes narrowed to the blonde hair, a blue-eyed woman who was skimming past him.

"So this is where you were living?" the woman spoke.

Her instinct for this woman was disliking.

"How did you find this place?" contempt blared through his tone and Asuka wondered what the woman in question could've done to evoke such wrath.

Then something clicked when her father called her 'kaa-san' and suddenly, the situation appeared alarmingly clear.

One thing was for sure, her grandma was a real piece of work. What the hell did her concern mean when she didn't even notice a supposedly crucial part of her life move out of the same house they lived in? That was like her mother telling the doctor that a baby might stop wanting to eat just because she might not feel like it, and the moronic doctor in question inherently believing the obvious nonsense of a lie.

"Shota!"

“You should leave. I don't need your money anymore, kaa-san.”

“I'm your kaa-san!”

It was similar, and then it wasn't similar. It was like seeing little glimpses of her mother. But her mother had evil gold eyes and her grandmother had ice blue eyes, her mother always carried herself with casual nonchalance and her grandmother carried herself with unrelenting firmness. Her mother reprimanded her for things Asuka couldn't control, habitually abused her with her snake tongue, and neglected her to the point of near-death— she didn't know nearly enough to form an assumption about her grandmother, but negligence was blatant and screeching from the short conversation her father and grandmother were having.

Her mother and grandmother were similar, just not in appearance wise.

Just in the way they affected their children emotionally. In negligence. In the snips of abuse which weren't essentially physical, but Asuka was sure it hurt more. Just— just in the worst ways.

When Asuka's memories started clashing and colliding, flashing before her eyes, she screamed. She screamed for it to go away, for it to forget itself because that was months ago. She didn't even *think* of that woman now that she was with her here. With her papa. She was okay now. Perfectly fine. She was well taken care of now, there was no need to dwell on the past— but she *couldn't* calm down, she couldn't forget the distress, the despondency, the hurt, the —

“It's okay, it's okay...” and her hand latched onto his shirt on instinct, wanting to complain about the itching feeling in her chest, but all that escaped was incoherent babbles, agitating her further. “It's okay, 'suka...” the light murmurs echoed in her ears as familiar hands smoothed over her unruly, raven hair. “... Papa will make the bad witch go away.”

“Who's kid is that?”

When her father— Papa said ‘mine’, a familiar warmth amplified in her chest, nearly allowing her lips to wobble. *It was like the day he called her his daughter.*

“You married without me knowing?!” The witch screamed, appearing feral.

“No. Asuka’s the product of a one-night stand.” she couldn’t stop her fist from aviating because he seriously didn’t need to flex on that point. Being reminded that she was a mistake was irking.

“Shota! If you’re still mad about leaving halfway through graduation then that’s extremely childish of you,” To be perfectly hypothetical, Asuka didn’t think she’d even have made it to school if she was left with her psychotic mother. “Taking care of children is not—”

When her father cut her off with a reply, the witch lady’s hair hovered above her head, eyes gleaming in silver, and it didn’t take a genius to figure out that she was furious. “I am your Kaa-san and you will give me the respect I deserve.”

“Why do you feel the need to interfere in my life? Just act like you always do and ignore me.”

“Who’s her kaa-san?”

Why’d she want to know? So that they could bond over which one of them failed their child the most.

“I don’t know. Might as well be dead for all I know.” and a giggle escaped her, strangely psyched at that aspect.

She appeared rabid by now, “How can you possibly raise a child without her Okaa-san?”

“Well, I didn’t have the best one either so I think my daughter will turn out just fine.”

Her laugh intensified.

“You disrespectful brat—” she started, hair still aviating, her fair skin tinting red— “you know what? Do what you want. But heed my warning, Shota, you’re not qualified to be a parent.e.” Witch grandmother jeered.

Her papa grinned like a lunatic, “I’ll take you up on that challenge.”

And she didn’t think anyone was surprised at the declaration.

Chapter End Notes

Okay you guys, I did NOT expect this work to get so much encouragement, like, what??? Thank you all for such positive feedback! I'll try my best to update sooner, but I have college going on so...

Writing this chapter was much harder than I thought. Getting Sakura's emotions, her transitions, the wall breaking and all of that was just very challenging. I realise that Sakura's reactions to Shota's mom might be really strong and biased, but that's to be expected when she's had a hell of an experience with her own mom.

List of OC's for this chapter:

Nakamura Utano- night care worker

Sato Yumena- night care worker


Akane Sasaki- night care worker

Bunko- night care worker

Chitose- kid who vomited

Uchida Kayano- Nurse

Kikuchi Taigen- Doctor moron

But still, hope this chapter was a good read 

Mama

Chapter Summary

Mama VS Papa. Kayama is rabid on many occasions. Hizashi is a sweetheart (sometimes)

Chapter Notes

OKAY! First things first, I don't know anything about police reports, I probably should've searched it up before writing this chapter but, well, it didn't happen. So I improvised. Lots of swearing!

Asuka's (Sakura's) month progression is intended.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

On a Saturday evening after an unusually uneventful patrol, Shota was lounging in his room, his daughter sleeping on his chest ever since he picked her up from the Night Care, and unable to put her down in the cot because she started whimpering every time he did so.

Asuka whimpered a lot at night. She was clingy too. It was one of the few times she acted like a normal kid and not her usual... whatever the hell she did. Though he was seriously concerned about how often she was doing that, and it didn't help that this behavior had only increased since his mother's uninvited visit... did babies even *have* nightmares, because Asuka sure as hell wasn't sick, and she was perfectly active in the morning. He read something about night terror and how babies didn't tend to remember the commotions they caused during the night, was this the same as that?

Shota didn't have the liberty of thinking any longer because a frantic knock resounded, the presence behind the door glaringly obvious due to Hizashi's signature voice shouting about something Shota didn't care to make sense of.

His quirk was already active when he pulled the door open, "Stop screaming." and the meaning was obvious enough when Hizashi saw

Asuka in his hands.

“Yeah, shit, sorry Sho,” Hizashi stammered, sliding past his friend and throwing off his boot, “but Kayama called and—” his best friend detoured to the kitchen and snagged a mug, pouring himself a cold cup of water before gulping it in one breath.

Shota quirked an eyebrow, closing the door behind him while readjusting his grip on Asuka.

“We’ve found her,” Hizashi whispered.

“What?”

“We’ve found Asuka-chan’s Okaa-san.” Hizashi confirmed, “Kayama just called me, and she said not to call you *yet* because you might stomp down to the police station, but then she called me again and said to call you because she’s seconds away from murdering the woman and.... Sho? Dude, are you alright?”

Shota blinked, his stiffness not going unnoticed by Hizashi, “Come on, let’s go.” and he turned, reaching for the baby carrier he normally hung on the coat hanger, but Hizashi snatched it out of his.

“If you’re planning on taking a sleeping child to a rowdy police station then I am going to smack you,” he said in a no-nonsense tone.

“She’s going to start crying as soon as I put her down.” Shota countered annoyedly, tugging on the carrier Hizashi had shown no inclination of ungripping.

Three minutes later, Shota let Hizashi handle a fussy Asuka because the man was seconds away from going feral on him.

Asuka’s mother was a person he didn’t have an ounce of memory to count on except for the obvious traits of what happened that night. And also someone who managed to compete with his mother in terms of irresponsibility and negligence.

Scratch that. Asuka’s mother was unbeatable in that aspect.

This woman had hunted him down only to shove Asuka onto him. Not to ask for financial aid, not so they could compromise and think of a more viable solution that didn’t lead to abandonment, not so they could talk it out and decide to put her up for adoption because they were both incapable teenagers— but then again, he didn’t deem

himself qualified until he started putting an effort to be a good parent for his daughter.

Incapability didn't mean they couldn't learn.

He wasn't about to turn out like his mother. He couldn't stand the thought of his daughter growing up in the same indifferent and afflicting environment he grew up in.

And If Asuka's mother had brought up somewhere along the way that she couldn't do this, she couldn't handle a child at such a young age, then they could've discussed that too. Because that was better than a shit stain of a letter declaring abandonment.

"Eraserhead?" he heard his alias name being called out behind the desk.

It was the cat officer, Tamakawa Sansa, who looked at him weirdly because, he 'smelled' weird, "Are you here for the Hinorima case? They're being moved tomorrow though, didn't Fujiwara inform you?"

Shota acknowledged him with a nod, "I'm here for something else." he provided instead, "Which interrogation room is Midnight using?"

"Uh, let me check... number four."

Shota grunted thanks and trudged past the desk, taking a right in the intersecting hallway and walking past several rooms to reach his destination. Outside, he saw Kayama inhaling what seemed to be coffee while her glasses were hiked over her head like a band. He took a seat beside her instead of quenching his curiosity.

"Sho," Kayama said, without looking at him as she swirled the content of her cup, "I don't think you're going to like what you find."

"That's an obvious deduction." Shota countered.

"I'm serious." Kayama retorted, this time, she focused on his ash eyes with her incensed ones, "That woman's a menace. It's a fucking miracle that Asuka's even alive right now—" Kayama crushed her paper cup, indifferent to the searing liquid burning her hands and dripping on her feet, "You should read the file before doing anything."

Shota frowned heavily. What did Kayama mean by that? But he didn't question it. Kayama was easily the most hot-headed amongst the trio, but getting her to rile up to this extent was rare.

Current Report By Imai Tozen, Leading Officer.

Assistance Received From Miyazaki Yasuko, Takeda Wakami, Pro Hero Present Mic, And Pro Hero Midnight.

On April 1st, 3093, Watanabe Takeru was allegedly accused of illegal attainment of Aizawa Shota's home address and child abandonment....

...On 5th April 3093, the suspect was confirmed as Watanabe Takeru, who was also confirmed to be seen with Aizawa Shota twelve months prior in an establishment called Whisper Drinks...

7th April 3093, located the suspect's family and collected... revealed by her family members...

....9th March 3093, Watanabe Minikui, currently known as Aizawa Asuka was admitted to Hosu Lifecare Hospital due to an extreme case of malnutrition and pneumonia. Her condition was closely monitored for a week before deeming her out of immediate danger....

[Conversations printed as per the recordings.]

Statement From (Sister) Watanabe Takako

".....when high school started, her grades took a huge drop, at first, Kaa-san and Tou-san said to give her space to sort herself out, they

didn't want to put any pressure on her... Then she started acting strange; coming home late, and bunking school, at one point, Ka-san was called to school because she had been caught smoking. *sniffs* Takeru left home that night... We filed a missing report, but every time she was found and brought back home, she'd try to leave and Tou-san got so furious one night because she'd resorted to stealing from them... she hadn't ever done that before, but after that, we didn't file any missing reports. Kaa-san said it was just a phase... and that Takeru would come to them when she got her head sorted out...

Long pause

"Then out of nowhere, two years after disappearing, Takeru showed up at our house... *sniffs* crying and... and she just looked terrible. Her hair was all over the place, there were scratch marks on her arms, bruises on her face, and... and she was heavily pregnant. We took her to the hospital immediately. She wasn't kept there long, and Kaa-san and tou-san seemed to forget everything she ever did, but when they tried asking about what happened to her, Takeru flat-out refused to speak of anything, and our parents didn't force her much after the frightening breakdown she had... they're always soft on her... maybe that's why they didn't realize..."

"Realise what?" [Officer Miyazaki Yasuko]

"Her tells. *blows nose* Takeru tends to have a very noticeable tell when she lies, it's because of her quirk her skin starts glimmering in and out of invisibility, but she's gotten most of it under control... when Kaa-san asked her if her unborn child's tou-san had abandoned them, she said yes, and... and I saw her nape flickering.... It was for a brief moment, but I still noticed. *clears her throat* Then tou-san went on about how Takeru should've aborted the child when she had the chance to and that Takeru was young and should be in college and not preparing to mother a child at her age— Takeru started sobbing by then, mumbling something along the lines of 'don't say that' and 'I love this child'. *inhales sharply* She lied about that as well. Kaa-san and tou-san were too busy comforting her, but I found it odd.

Drinks water

"Takeru claimed she had a job in Hosu, it was apparently where she had been living after running away from home. I don't know what she did, she was very vague about it, all we knew is that it was some publishing company. But by the time I returned from my business trip, she had managed to enamor my parents to the point where they

bought her an apartment in Hosu, and even let her move out to live in the apartment with one of her friends."

"Were you there at the birth of the child?" [Officer Takeda Wakami]

Shakes head "Unfortunately not, neither my parents nor I were able to make it to the birth. Tou-san had to go overseas for business and Kaa-san and I went to visit our Nii-san since he lived in Yokohama, of course, Kaa-san was reluctant to go because Takeru was nearing birth, but Takeru convinced her to go, Nii-san's wife was pregnant at that time too, though nowhere near birth. Then... then his wife got into an accident and miscarried... lots of things happened, in the end, Kaa-san stayed in Yokohama and told me to go back because Takeru had given birth three days before that."

"She named her child 'Minikui'. *sniffs* I didn't think a child could be named something so horrendous, but... but Takeru laughed it off saying her name didn't matter... that she was giving up the child for adoption— that took me by surprise, of course, because it was the first time I was hearing it, but tou-san already knew and of course, Kaa-san didn't know. Takeru said Kaa-san wouldn't be on board with that idea...*voice wobbles as sniffing intensifies* I... I couldn't visit Mini-chan as much as I wanted to because I was having a hard time at my job, but whenever I did go, Takeru took the longest time to open the door and... and I didn't think it was odd because Takeru was prone to be tired. She was always breastfeeding that child too, and Mini-chan was always asleep whenever I came."

"Then I get a call from Takeru saying Mini-chan was hospitalized for pneumonia and I rushed over, her condition was stable, fortunately, but when I talked with the nurses there, it seemed as if Mini-chan had been there for almost a week *blows nose* and when I confronted Takeru about why she didn't tell me earlier, Takeru said that she didn't want to bother me— and I *believed* it."

"I know I wasn't the greatest Oba-san to Mini-chan, and I didn't think bonding with a child who was bound to leave would be good for me— but goddammit how could I have been so blind?!"

"That's right, you were blind as batshit, drown in your miser you fu—" [Pro Hero Midnight from behind the screen]

"Kaya- Midnight!" [Pro Hero Present Mic from behind the screen]

"We can take a break if you like, Takako-san." [Officer Miyazaki Yasuko]

"N-no, no, I can go on.... *Sniffs* I visited the hospital a lot more after that, but I could only come during the night so Mini-chan was always asleep. Takeru was never there when I came in, but a nurse— Kayano was always with Mini-chan, she told me that Takeru would only come during the night because of her 'job', I didn't know what job she was talking about, Takeru had said that she had taken maternity leave, so there was no reason she'd have to keep working."

"Then two days after the discharge, I went over to visit her with Kaa-san who was dying to see Mini-chan for the longest time, and she wasn't there.... Kaa-san was *furious* , of course, that Takeru had given her away so easily after such an experience... and I assumed that Takeru deemed herself unworthy because she looked like she had been through hell and back....I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry—*Sobs* I'm so so- sorry, Mini-chan—"

"It's Asuka! Quit it with that horrible name!" [Pro Hero Midnight from behind the screen]

Statement From (Bartender) Arai Umi

"Are you sure of the date?" [Officer Miyazaki Yasuko]

"Pretty damn sure, saw 'em clear as day. And I don't forget no nothing with this bloody quirk of mine. Not ta mention it was my kaa-chan's birthday. I was catchin' a smoke after my shift, these both come stumblin' upstairs, wrapped aroun' each other like they glued on with Dunlop or some shit, then they pretty much humpin' each other in the hallway and I flip them the finger 'cos the door was right next to 'em, *huffs* Then the woman steps on my feet and I'm thinkin' not-so holy thoughts 'cos I *just* washed them that mornin', so I ended up doin' the honors and opened the door an' shoved those two face-sucking moths inside the room, even made sure to step on the lady's foot too."

"....thank you for your time." [Officer Miyazaki Yasuko]

"Don't sweat it."

Statement From (Nurse) Uchida Kayano.

"Minikui Watanabe? Yes, I was in charge of her. We called her Mini-chan around here though, the poor child had such an ugly name. She was in terrible condition too when her okaa-san brought her in, barely alive. And Watanabe-san was frantic, claiming that Mini-chan refused to stop drinking altogether... but the doctor said since Watanabe-san was a young okaa-san, she wouldn't know heads or tails on how to handle a child so we didn't report the oddity... no wonder the child looked so frightened at the aspect of returning home...

"Any odd behavior executed by Watanabe-san during her time spent in the hospital?" [Officer Imai Tozen]

"Oh no, she was perfectly fine. Picked up tricks I thought her like fish in water, we watched her during the morning because Watanabe-san was working, and she'd come during the night to pump milk and carry Mini-chan—"

"Asuka. It's Asuka, kindly refer to the child by that name please." [Pro Hero Present Mic from behind the screen]

"Ah, yes, sorry, Asuka-chan. Watanabe-san would carry Asuka-chan..."

Statement From (Doctor) Kikuchi Taigen.

"... after the diagnosis was confirmed we questioned Watanabe-san about it, but she was a young okaa-san, claimed that Mini-chan—"

"Goddamnit, it's A-s-u-k-a, is that hard to pronounce? Why do you all insist on calling the kid that shit stain of a name?!" [Pro Hero Midnight from behind the screen]

"—Pardon me?"

"—Can you stop blowing up at everything and everyone?— Kikuchi-

san, it is most adequate if you'd call the child Asuka and not 'Minikui', thank you." [Pro Hero Present Mic from behind the screen]

"Um, okay, s-so she claimed that Asuka-chan had stopped suckling all of a sudden and said something along the lines of how she thought her child might not want to feel like eating and promptly burst into tears... I felt bad for her, and most young mothers are clueless... we get plenty of those around here, so our normal procedure was to teach Watanabe-san how to properly take care of the child..."

"And you are *sure* you found no signs of abuse?" [Officer Imai Tozen]

"Yes, *nods her head*, Asuka-chan was in a terrible condition when she was brought in, and Watanabe-san had also claimed that she had gradually fallen asleep while trying to feed her, and later that morning realized that her child was burning up. Since there was..."

*

Shota closed the file with a nasty storm brewing inside his chest.

Asuka had nearly died.

His daughter had almost died.

"Did... did she agree to everything on this file or—"

Kayama growled, "That woman had no remorse. Didn't even try to defend herself when I asked her— you know what? Do the honors yourself, I'm going to get another coffee." Kayama stood up, strutting away to the other end of the hallway, her curses still echoing in his ears.

Shota sighed, tightening his hold on the file as he stood up. So much for an uneventful night.

*

“Are you going to ask me anything *or* are you just gonna continue staring at me? I mean I know I’m prettier than anyone you’ve ever met, but glaring like that is rude, you know?”

Shota stared at her more intensely, his memory not evoking a single fragment of memory, so he started with the basics. “How’d you find out my address?”

She smirked, gold eyes gleaming as she clasped her cuffed hands together. “That’s easy, I had a friend hack it— not going to tell you who it was, I ain’t no snitch.”

Yeah, she was everything else but a snitch. He maintained a neutral expression, “Was there an ulterior motive in returning to your family? And none of your bullshit answers because I will *know* .”

“Scary.” she pouted mockingly, tilting her head and looking straight into his hardened gray eyes, “You weren’t like this that night though... so *vulnerable* and innocent—”

“Answer the question that you are asked.”

Her silvery laugh filled the room, “Minkui’s papa’s so cute. You’re a sensitive soul, aren’t you? So unlike the busty woman who just interrogated me. I have no idea why she went King Kong on me though, I was perfectly cooperative.”

“You—”

“Fine, fine, I’m answering, you want to know whether I had an ulterior motive for going back to my family? Of course, I did dip shit, why would I go there if I didn’t have any choice? My boyfriend ditched me after he found out I was pregnant, said he ain’t taking care of some bastard child, and honestly, I wasn’t psyched about it either, but my life was at risk if I had aborted her then, so there’s that.” she sighed dramatically, “And it wasn’t like that child made my life any easier after she was born, I mean honestly, that pain-in-the-ass didn’t even look like me, black hair and green eyes— her name fits her quite perfectly.”

Shota wondered if his ears were dirty.

“Heard you changed her name, I think that name’s too good for her, but you know what, Papa? You do you— where were we, oh yeah, so

anyways, since I couldn't just show up at the front door after running away from home, I roughed myself up and cried— everyone's slave to gorgeous women, except when you have a kid, that is. No matter how pretty I was, if I was seen with that blob of annoyance, everyone was always crowding her, like are they *blind* ? I didn't take her out much, but the nurses were always cooing over that walnut like she was some emperor—”

Bile rose in his throat, but he shoved it down forcefully, trying to focus his eyes on the blabbing menace.

“My parents, of course, let me live with them, but they were so damn *intrusive* that I ended up crying more— Hey Papa, you good? You're looking a little pale right now.” her eyebrows furrowed, staring at him with a slight tilt of her head, and if it were another day, another circumstance where they weren't acquainted, he might have thought she was aesthetically pleasing, but right now, it was sickening. Watanabe Takeru's whole being was sickening to him.

“Oh, I get it! It's taking a toll on you, right? Looking after that leech has been draining you—”

“Shut up.” Shota said scathingly, “Another word about Asuka and I just might forget that you're a woman.”

"Wow, sexist much?"

And he was close to doing something exceedingly illegal, "Asuka's a perfectly lovely child, if anyone's the Menace, or the Leech, or an Annoying Pain in the Ass, or a goddamn Walnut; that's you, Watanabe Takeru." he inhaled deeply to placate himself, "Do you realize what you're here for? Or are you as demented as you seem?"

The woman huffed, looking away from him and pushing her chair back, rocking it back and forth. "That's harsh, Papa." she drawled lazily, "'course I know what I'm here for."

He hoped she slipped from the stool. "Did Asuka refuse to drink from you or did *you* refuse her food?"

“Woah, hold up about that—” her eyebrows furrowed, and distress showed on her face. Shota might've taken that as a minuscule amount of concern she had left for Asuka because the woman had seemingly *birthed* her if not for the next words escaping her mouth. “I did *nothing* of that sort— I mean it wasn't— like I didn't mean it, okay?! Sometimes I forget to feed her and only remember to when she cries.”

she huffed annoyedly, hiking her shoulder to adjust her hair, "As much as I dislike the kid, I didn't want her to die, alright?"

....and that was supposedly a valid reason to justify almost killing his daughter?

"Stop looking at me like that!" she snapped at him, "It was an accident, alright?—"

He hiked up the look he had just to peeve her, "If you had the means to locate me, why didn't you do it sooner?" that would've been a hell of a lot better for Asuka. No wonder the kid got so clingy, this pest of a woman made sure to void her of any form of affection.

Takeru scoffed, "You think you were my first choice? You do realize that we're the same fucking age, don't you?" Then her expression got eerily neutral,

"Haven't you read about how I was going to put her up for adoption? — Yeah, well, that plan went out the window as soon as that kid got herself diagnosed with some-monia or whatever." she shrugged casually, picking off the jewels from her manicured fingers, "So I turned to my friend to get your address— which by the way, was a fucking bitch to get to, out of all the type of heroes you could be, you went ahead and picked the most annoying one."

"You're despicable," Shota said heavily, staring at her golden orbs.

"I know." she retorted, beaming.

"You've traumatized a child that can barely talk." he threw next, knowing that won't affect this sociopath.

She rolled her eyes, "She'll get over it."

"You know she doesn't cry much?" he continued, not knowing why he was talking to this stone-hearted nuisance, "Rarely did in the first two months. The first time she laughed was when she saw a hero dressed like a ninja. She loves anything ninja related. Her favorite toy is the rattle from the day she received her name. She hates it when I change her diapers. She likes it when I ruffle her hair, and always leans into my touch. And her version of a hug is squeezing my hand—"

"Why are you telling—"

"She's an extremely smart kid, and I sometimes think that she

understands me on a level that six-month-olds shouldn't be able to. She causes mayhem in the Night Care I send her to, and I can't even elaborate on the pout she makes whenever I tell her to behave. She hates it when strangers touch her cheek—"

"Dude, I don't know what you're trying to—"

"She enamors people wherever she goes. She loves the bouncer chair I bought her, and I don't know exactly what it is that she does, but her eyes move too much beneath her lids to show that she isn't sleeping. She's unusually strong for a baby and doesn't let go of me when she's crying. She loves the walks we go on—"

A loud clang reverberated from the cuffs meeting the table. *"What is the point of telling me all of this?"*

Shota pushed his chair back and stood up, "It's simple, isn't it? I'm telling you everything about a child you deemed to be a nuisance. I'm telling you about everything you ever missed, and everything you'll never have." He pushed the chair inside and unpocketed his phone, "I'm amplifying your irresponsibility and dispassion that are stuck to the very core of your vile soul." And he relished the redness displayed on her face as he tapped his gallery, clicking on a specific photo.

"This is Aizawa Asuka the first month she was dropped to my doorstep." he showed it to the befuddled woman before taking it back and swiping to the most recent one where Kayama and Hizashi dressed her up as a mermaid, "This is her now."

She cackled this time, loud and ugly, "Oi shithead, you think I'm jealous of that shitstain? Do you think I'm magically going to develop a motherly instinct for that squirming worm? You both Papa and daughter could go to hell for all I care!"

Shota stuffed his phone inside his pocket and regarded her with a bored gaze, "I honestly don't expect *anything* from you. I'm sure nothing's going to affect your cold, dead heart; not the sorrow of your parents, not the concern of your siblings, not the cry of your flesh and blood," He tore his gaze away from her and turned to the door. "You're the extremity of what a lost cause could extend to, Watanabe Takeru."

Shota left, not at all looking forward to the day of trial because seeing her face still made him want to punch it.

*

On July twenty-ninth, the day Asuka turned seven months, Shota was forced into wearing swimming trunks.

"Dude, this is the time to create memories! Do you want Asuka-chan to forever remember you as a crusty old hobo? Do you?!" Kayama shouted in his face, perforating the sunny yellow trunks into his chest. "We need these photos! I even spent half my salary on this bougie camera!"

He reluctantly took the neon monstrosity from her, "I'm not doing this if I have to wear the same color shirt." he grunted.

Kayama smiled so brightly that he was tempted to burn the glowing cloth.

"The shirt did—"

"I'm not doing it."

"But Sho—"

"You might have succeeded in dressing me as a cat in the fourth month, but *this* is going to blind me and I am not wearing it." Shota sacked the shorts on Kayama's crimson sofa and promptly sat on it.

The seventh-month shoot was supposedly pool themed, and he wouldn't have hated taking photos if both his friends weren't so intent on dressing him up along with Asuka every time. The fifth-month theme was the only one that was relatively normal, and even in that, they had ventured over to a field of flowers and made him wear a floral wreath over his head.

"I made the effort to decorate my apartment and you do this to me?!" Kayama squealed, and suddenly he was attacked from the side, trapped in a headlock while she tried to make juice out of his brain.

"What the hell are you guys doing?" Hizashi's voice echoed in the living room. Shota's palm heel met Kayama's chin right then, and she

lost her grip, which made her fall on top of Shota's head.

“Sho refuses to wear the outfit I picked him!” Kayama complained, not bothering to fix her posture.

Hizashi scoffed, readjusting his grip on seven-month-old Asuka who was dressed in a sunny yellow, frilled two-piece swimsuit. “Told you he wouldn't wear that.”

Kayama huffed, digging her elbows into his side as she stood up, “Fine! Don't wear anything, you grouch!”

“I won't!” Shota snapped back, equally peeved.

Later, they compromised with the yellow trunks and a black shirt Hizashi had bought just in case Kayama hadn't managed to convince Shota. Then they took pictures in the pool where they had various inflated floaties (too many). Asuka was as photogenic as always, displaying her gummy smile for the camera. Shota's subdued smile was there whenever Kayama wasn't snapping at him to do so, but he grinned his crazy grin just to peeve her when her requests got too much to handle. The last photo to conclude the photo shoot was the one where they all took together; Kayama on his right, Hizashi on his left, and Asuka in the middle.

Amongst the numerous pictures he had to choose from, that was one of the photos he never had trouble putting in the album.

*

Kayama always knew Asuka was a weird kid, and she did plenty of weird shit to validate that point. But this was something she was seeing for the first time, and...just.. *wow* .

“She does that sometimes,” Utano said, watching the scene unfold with amused eyes.

Kayama rarely ever came to pick up Asuka from the Night Care, but Shota was running a high fever and his condition seemed quite serious

from the way he kept pausing with every word.

“...you mean she uses that kid’s face as a stepping stool to climb over the gate?” she enunciated slowly, blinking at the way the green-haired kid proceeded to shoot a thumbs up at Asuka, and Asuka in return, nodding at the kid before crawling away to what seemed to be just another area of rowdy kids. “Why is she doing that?” Kayama queried, bewildered.

Utano shrugged, “We don't know, sometimes, she just latches onto a kid’s arm and doesn't let go, other times, she’s just starin’ at the kids who’re usin’ their quirks in fascination.”

She leaned against the wall opposite to the two-way mirror, a smile tugging at her lips as she watched Asuka latching onto Tanaka’s elbow, then almost chuckled at the way the boy appeared flustered, “She’s smart about it too if we keep checkin’ on her too much, she minds her own business and plays with 'zuku, but the moment we let our guard down, well, you’re witnessin’ it right now.”

Kayama nodded slowly, still observing the wild spectacle of the kid just dead-ass glaring at the startled boy without letting him go. Then another kid with wild, indigo hair entered the scene, shouting about what a little worm was doing at the big kids' side before promptly pushing the eight-month-old to the point where the little bean lost her balance and crashed on the ground.

The fucking insolence —

“Brawls among children are common, Kayama-kun.” Utano stopped her before she even thought of stepping out, “And beating up a kid three-fourths your age ain’t the solution.”

“I wasn't thinking of fighting a kid,” Kayama replied defiantly, advancing onto the exit behind the screen to enter the common area when Utano halted her steps.

“There’s always a caretaker around to supervise.” the older woman provided, “Besides, I’d say Asuka-chan’s got the situation under control.”

Kayama was momentarily puzzled before she gasped at Asuka ramming her legs into the purple-haired brat’s shin, then watched with growing astoundment when the boy proceeded to fall with a loud cry— the boy fell from a *baby kick* — and that wasn't even the end, no, Asuka was climbing over the kid’s chest now, splatting her chubby

hands at the shocked boy's face as if she was killing bugs.

Kayama didn't particularly like the kid for pushing Asuka as he did moments ago, but she wasn't necessarily sadistic enough to keep feeding her inner monster, so she tucked in her definitely-not amusement and escaped from behind the two-way mirror. By the time she entered the common area, someone was already calming the dispute between the two kids.

“— Now both of you say *sorry* to each other and hug it out!” A bunny-eared woman reprimanded.

Kayama stifled a laugh at the disgusted face Asuka made.

“She’s glaring at me!” The kid with the purple hair screeched, hiding behind a male caretaker.

“Oh no, that’s just Asuka-chan’s sorry face. Come on now, this all started because you pushed her, Daichi-kun, let’s be the bigger person and say sorry, alright?”

“But she’s a baby! She won’t understand what I’m saying!” The brat yelled.

"You'll hurt her feelings." Bunny ears admonished.

Kayama had enough kiddy drama, she had to buy Shota’s medicine on the way to his apartment, and this brat was just delaying that.

“Here to pick up Asuka-chan!” she chirped, entirely disregarding the mood.

“Kayama-san, right? Let me just get her bag.” Yumena, who had just entered the scene to find out the source of the commotion, exited. Kayama wasted no time in taking Asuka from Bunny ears who seemed quite conflicted.

“Daichi-kun...” Bunny ears pressed. And said brat appeared more bratty than ever, turning up his nose, and tucking himself behind the flustered male caretaker.

“S-sorry about this,l.” The male caretaker stuttered, simultaneously tapping the younger boy's arm in an attempt to vomit out an apology from him, “Oi, Daichi, are you going to act like this? Asuka-chan’s Okaa-san is a Hero, you know? She might even get you crossed off All Might’s good list if you keep behaving like this.”

That seemed to ring out an expression from both Kayama and Daichi.

“She’ll get me cut off All Might’s good list?!” The boy screamed, his voice unsteady.

“Okaa-san?” Kayama whispered confusedly.

The other kids started murmuring, some squealing hysterically because getting cut off All Might’s good list was a huge fucking deal.

“No way!” The boy seemed in denial, evidently feeling confident too because he was getting out his protective shell, said shell, was of course, behind the male caretaker’s legs, “You’re lying, and Bunko-nii-chan said lying is bad! I’ve never seen this lady hero!”

“Oh?” Kayama tilted her head, her patience snapping, “Tell me, boy,” she crouched to his level, studying his light purple eyes intensely, “just because you don’t see something, does that mean it doesn’t exist?”

“Kayama-san...”

“Well,” Kayama chirped, changing her tune abruptly after seeing the kid was getting glassy-eyed, “don’t disregard everything you don’t see or don’t know. Alright? They’re plenty of heroes out there you haven’t seen.” Then she took his right hand and squeezed it reassuringly, wearing a sickeningly sweet smile, “Now let’s make up so that no one ends up on All Might’s naughty list.”

Daichi nodded, his teary gaze focusing on Asuka, “Sorry, Asuka, for pushing you that hard. That was wrong of me and, and I’m very sorry.... Just please tell you Okaa-san to not tell All Might about me, alright? I don’t wanna end up on the naughty list..”

“I’m not—”

“Ma!”

Kayama stilled very briefly, then nudged Asuka to tell her version of sorry which was just a bunch of indecipherable babbles.

When she left the establishment with the baby bag slung over her shoulder, Kayama deemed it appropriate to say her next words.

“Was that fucking hoax or did you just call me ‘Ma’?”

Asuka blinked at her, emerald orbs glimmering innocently.

“Because if that is your first word, your papa’s going to murder me.”

“Ma.”

“Please don't call me that.”

“Mama.”

That day, Kayama left the medicine hanging at the door handle so that Hizashi could receive it, bought a bunch of baby products that Asuka might need, then retired to her home because, well, she didn't want to be on the receiving end of Shota’s pouting, which the man in question would refuse to the point of frustration, then go an extra length to contradict it by committing every petty act he could do towards her—the point was, she wasn't dealing with that.

“If your tiny baby brain can understand me to the slightest degree, please call Sho Papa, alright? Pretty please?” she pleaded, feeding her a spoon of a random, surprisingly tasty vegetable mix, “He's going to sulk for *ages* , and I'd rather not be on the receiving end of that.”

Asuka tilted her head and Kayama smiled hopefully.

“Mama.”

“You know what? Fuck you, you adorable piece of shit.”

✱

The next day, Kayama went over to drop Asuka at Shota’s place after confirming that he was doing well, feeling quite hopeful that Asuka had forgotten her first words. The girl hadn't repeated it after last night, and she didn't know if it was because Asuka was in the process of waking up, but the girl hadn't so much mumbled the word ‘ma’ or anything remotely close to the word for that matter.

“Asuka-chan, try saying ‘papa’.” Kayama cooed, making sure to keep her words clear and slow enough for the kid to follow.

Asuka didn't seem very interested in repeating the words because she

was too busy fumbling with her loose ponytail, though the girl did seem to wear the most peculiar face of... of something Kayama couldn't quite distinguish.

"Come on!" Kayama whined, lowering her pace on purpose. "You can't do this to me!"

After five minutes of constant complaining to a child, Kayama decided to enter a small establishment to have a second round of breakfast.

Then promptly crashed into someone.

"Kayama-chan?"

Kayama couldn't help the smile breaking out on her face.

"Tomo!" she exclaimed, "How're you? Last I saw of you was at graduation!"

Shiretoko Tomoko, more famously known as Ragdoll now, bounced on her heels as her yellow eyes peered at the child Kayama was holding. "Yeah, it's been so long." she answered cheerfully, "But I didn't know you had such an *adorable* sister."

Kayama blinked, simultaneously side-stepping because she was in the way of another customer, "She's not—"

"Oh? Is that you, Nemuri?"

Not a beat later Asuka was giggling and Kayama almost swore at the sexiness before her eyes. Kamihara Shinya may have looked like a walking origami to some, but Kayama found him exotic—

"Oh, Aizawa's daughter is here too." her thoughts halted, and she was hit with an exceedingly bad premonition. "Hello, nice to meet you again." Shinya shook one of Asuka's wildly flying hands, a smile visible on his face since he wasn't wearing his standard mask.

"Aizawa?" Tomoko questioned, eyebrows furrowing, "You mean *Aizawa Shota-kun*?" she emphasized, glancing between a haggard-looking Kayama, a buoyant child, and Shinya who seemed extremely amused.

"Do we know another of the same name?" Shinya retorted, throwing a hand over Tomoko's shoulder. An action Kayama missed because she was having an internal crisis. "But this sure is a surprise. Never

thought you two would've clicked like *that* .”

“Surprise?!” Tomoko busted, spontaneously latching onto the extended chubby hands fiddling with Shinya’s always hanging scarf (The man seemed to wear it no matter what the weather was) and squeezed to assure her heart and eyes, “This is a miracle! Kayama-chan and Shota-kun— that— you know what? I’m not judging— but holy shit Kayama you as an Okaa-san? That’s just... *wow* ...” and Tomoko just stared disbelievingly, her hand still firm on Asuka’s chubby hands.

“Look, she isn't—”

“Mama!”

Kayama let out an incomprehensible growl that earned her too many odd glances. “You made her say the M word again!” she finally screeched, her blue eyes glassy as she childishly pointed at the greenette.

“Oh my,” Shinya said, “Are you alright, Nemuri?”

“Mama!”

“All right?!” Kayama screamed, “I am not fucking alright, but thank you very much for asking!”

Soon after Kayama left the establishment after losing her appetite and heard Shinya say something about keeping their secrets or whatever. Kayama was too infuriated to retaliate or correct their misunderstanding.

“Kid, mama is very fucking endearing, it is,” Kayama started after a deep breath, “and honestly, I don't even mind that.” She dodged a kid hopping over the white strips of the zebra crossing, “But before you started calling me *anything* , why don't you start with your papa, huh? I assure you he'll be over the moon, even if he does look constipated while showing it.”

Kayama nearly tripped over when she stepped onto the pavement and Asuka’s giggle echoed in her ears. “Yes, my suffering is very amusing to you, isn't it?” she stared at the kid’s emerald orbs, then tugged at the marshmallow cheeks. “If you’re smart enough to climb over the gate by using another kid’s face as a staircase, then why can’t you understand this?” Asuka whined, shaking her head in retaliation.

“Fine, be that way,” Kayama said in mock anger. Ensuingly, her façade melted when Asuka rubbed against her face like a cat.

*

The stairs leading to Shota’s apartment were somehow more tiring than usual, but Kayama decided Asuka’s speech was out of her control and Shota would likely get over it in a few days— *years* . When her feet met the platform, Asuka’s light babble intensified, and when her hand knocked on the door, it didn’t even take more than a minute to open.

There Shota was, his wavy hair tied to a ponytail, clad in a rare white shirt and grey shorts, ash eyes only meeting hers for a fraction before focusing on his daughter, relief evident in his eyes.

“How was—” Shota extended his arms to take Asuka, Kayama stepped back, her hold tightening on the kid.

His eyebrow quirked, “I don’t have a fever anymore.”

“I know.” Kayama said, gnawing the inside of her cheek, “But, before anything else, I want to tell you something.”

“What did you do?” Shota questioned cautiously, hands falling back to his side.

“Hey, it’s nothing scandalous or anythin’,” Kayama defended, jutting her chin at him, “And it wasn’t even my fault this time, your kid— look, I don’t know how this happened, alright? We barely bring it up around her, but she might’ve caught it at the Night Care— the point is, please don’t hate me!”

“Kayama, get to the point,” Shota pronounced annoyedly.

“She called me mama, alright?!” Kayama burst, “I don’t know why, or how, or when she learned it— just don’t hate me! *Believe me* , I tried getting her to call you Papa!”

Shota stared at her for a solid minute.

Kayama was starting to think he might have a seizure any second, but then—

“Pfft—”

“...are you *laughing*?” Kayama watched in disbelief as Shota’s head turned to the side, his hand covering the lower half of his face.

“Course no—pfft”

“*You are!*” Kayama screeched.

Then Shota slammed the door on her face and Kayama was deeply confused.

Was he going mad from the shock?

“Told you he wouldn’t cope well.” Kayama drawled, tilting her head backward as she bounced on her heels. “We might as well get out of here and let him deal with whatever the fuck he’s going through.”

Asuka thought otherwise because she tugged at her hair quite forcefully, “Yes, I know you’re a papa’s girl through and through and all, but I don’t think he has the mental capacity to handle you right now, pipsqueak. You’ve just graced him with the ultimate form of betrayal.”

An indignant squawk echoed.

“Glaring at me doesn’t fix what you’ve done. Call me dramatic or whatever, but that man decided not to put you up for adoption just to spite his mother.”

“Pa!”

Kayama rolled her eyes, “Yeah, that’s right, that’s exactly the reason why I’ll be on the receiving end of his pinnacle of pettiness.”

“Papa.”

“I mean, don’t get me wrong, but I don’t think he was going to put you up for adoption anyways, but it certainly did bring a stop to us having to bring all those candidates, ‘Zashi was right, you know? The day he brought back a shop full of baby products just to accommodate you for a ‘few nights’, he said he knew exactly how this was going to end.”

“Papa.”

“Sho was already whipped for you by the end of the first month—what did you just say?” Kayama loomed at the child as if she had sprouted horns.

Shota opened the door, no signs of his prior episode of hilarity evident except for the amused glimmer in his eyes.

Kayama scramble to explain, “Sho she just called you—”

“Papa, yes, I know,” Shota said, extending his arms to retrieve the child once more. Kayama didn't back away this time, openly gaping as Shota patted Asuka's head with unveiled fondness.

“You— when— *how* — were you— *and you couldn't have told me sooner, you fucking troglodyte!*” Kayama erupted, heaving, veins popping, and nose flaring.

“You do realize I have neighbors?”

“Fuck your neighbors. Do you know how much sleep I lost over this?!”

Shota shrugged, turning his back on her as he walked inside his apartment. Kayama stomped inside after him, hazardously shutting the door and throwing off her shoes untidily, sacking the baby bag on a heavily slumbering Hizashi who was curled up on the two-seater sofa.

Shota settled Asuka on the play mat knowing that she wouldn't move around before retreating to the kitchen where Kayama was drinking water right out of the jug.

“I hate you.”

“Okay.”

“I really, *really* fucking hate you, you piece of utter shit. You might like roaming around the night like some soulless zombie, but I need—”

“We both know this isn't about losing sleep.” Shota intervened, snagging the jug from her as he ventured to the sink, picking up the sponge, he initiated to aggressively scrub the jug.

“Damn right, it isn't you fucker!” Kayama bellowed.

“Look, it was a surprise to me too.” Shota said, rinsing the jug, “She said it out of nowhere while I was dropping her off at Night Care, and seriously, what would you do with her first words anyway? Frame them? It isn't like she said anything out of the ordinary.”

Kayama grumbled distinctly coherent curses.

“And Asuka calling you mama probably isn't what you think it is,” he added, drying the outside of the jug.

She quirked an eyebrow.

“She calls Hizashi ‘Ee’, and you’re named Kayama, her version of your name is just the last two words: Ma.” he started filling the jug with fresh water, “Mama is probably from the Night Care, I reckon she hears plenty of those there. It’s not a surprise that she put two and two together.”

“That makes sense.” Kayama nodded, “But hold the up about her calling Hizashi ‘Ee’— why am I the last one?!”

“Why’re you so immature?” Shota retorted, placing the jug where it was.

Kayama snorted, “Says the dude who got a fever from his daughter calling him *P apa* . Some tough shit you are.”

“I did not— “

“Oh save it Sho, we both know you didn't just randomly drop sick.”

Shota glared at her. Kayama shot him the shittiest smile she could muster up.

Then they heard a familiar squawk from their habitually cacophonous friend, both their attention shifting towards the source.

“SHE’S WALKING! ASUKA-CHAN’S WALKING— WHERE IS MY PHONE?!”

Kayama gaped, leaving her stool shaking in her wake as she zoomed to where Hizashi was. Sure enough, Asuka *was* walking. The kid was dumping all the surprises at once.

She looked back to observe her tsundere friend’s reaction, but he wasn't there.

Instead, he was crouching a little further away from the kitchen, his line of sight directly in front of Asuka's as he beckoned her to come with a soft smile visible on his face.

"Oi 'Zashi," Kayama muttered, "forget about Asuka-chan, make sure to take a picture of Sho before he starts scowling again."

"Roger that," Hizashi murmured without hesitation.

They watched the scene from the couch as Asuka's chubby legs trudged towards a waiting Shota, her hands extended to balance herself, a gummy grin blooming on her angelic face.

When Asuka neared Shota, she jumped into his hands, hugging the man with everything her little body had, Shota's hand covered the little body whole, reciprocating the hug in such an endearing manner that Hizashi sniffed beside her, mumbling some shit about how beautiful it was.

And it was.

It truly was.

Not that she was crying.

No way.

*

Chapter End Notes

I kind of flat lined when writing the last segment of this chapter, so I'm sorry if it's bland.

List of OC's for this chapter:

Nakamura Utano- night care worker

Sato Yumena- night care worker

Akane Sasaki- night care worker

Bunko- night care worker

Miyazaki Yasuko- police officer

Imai Tozen- police officer
Takeda Wakami- police officer
Daichi- brat kid
Tanaka- flustered kid
Arai Umi- Bartender
Uchida Kayano- Nurse
Kikuchi Taigen- Doctor moron
Watanabe Takeru- Btch
Watanabe Takako- not-so bright aunt

Anywayssss, hope this was a good read♡

Burgers and smoothies

Chapter Summary

Asuka grows.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Are you suicidal?”

A squawk echoed before the bulldozer in his hand started struggling to be put down. Again.

“Asuka, your knees are scraped, your elbow looks horrid, your toe is bleeding, and blood is all over your teeth. I am not putting you down just so you can get more injured.”

“Papa!” his possibly crazy daughter screamed, glaring at him. He only tightened his hold on her.

“Don't *papa* me.” she huffed, then proceeded to ram her mouth in his shoulder, biting him.

He snorted this time, “Yes, receiving a bite from your barely stable teeth is very hurtful. Does that quench your thirst, maniacal child? Or do you still want to zoom around the park, and crash yourself into a tree like you did three minutes back?”

Another cry of frustration was enough to answer his question.

One moment he was setting her on the ground of the park they frequented, the next moment she decided she didn't need his support to walk— to run, making his heart vomit when she sprinted at full speed, ramming into a dog with a frisbee in its mouth. Then as if that wasn't enough of a scare, she proceeded to get up before he could reach her, zooming off again, wind in her hair, loud and labored laughs resonating along with her hobby of making his heart suffer.

She crashed into a baby stroller with another baby inside it, and he

didn't know he could exhale so many *apologies* at once at the startled mother. And really, he didn't think the kid would continue on her wild endeavor of colliding with living and nonliving being all alike while having a nasty, scraped knee, but was proven wrong with eye blinks because halfway through his apologies to the woman, she took off into the horizon, allowing very coherent curses to slip out of his mouth as he started chasing after a nine-month-old child who had only started walking a week ago.

He, a fucking pro hero, one of his winning qualities being *agility*, could not stop his nine-month-old daughter when she pounded into a massive tree trunk. He expected her to cry, which was *normal*, and he assumed so were the other people gathered under the thick foliage tree, enjoying a nice picnic. But of course, Asuka didn't cry.

She smiled instead, a bright, toothy, bloody grin as she fell back, reeling from the heavy smack she took. He caught her from falling on the grass, just staying still for a minute because *what the fuck*.

So now here they were, on their way to the hospital because he didn't want to assume anything with her health, and his spawn's mood taking a one-eighty turn since he refused to stay at the park any longer to allow her to enjoy the venture of an improvised version of whack-a-mole with a twist of herself being the hammer.

"We're going whether you like it or not, you should've thought it through before running off like that," he grunted.

She pouted.

"You know you'll feel the full brunt of it once all the adrenaline flushes out of your system."

"No!"

"I have no idea what that means, but we're not going back to the park for today. You look like someone sucker punched you in the face, Asuka, and for someone who's suffered pneumonia, I'm not risking it with the infections. We aren't going to the park until your leg is scar free."

She appeared glassy-eyed at that.

His heart prickled.

But he didn't take it back either. Sometimes, putting your foot down

was... *necessary*.

*

Asuka had no clue what compelled her to take off like that.

Maybe she'd blame it on a baby's instincts.

The pain aligned with risk. And she took the risk to stumble about on her noodle legs, but running was freeing, and her father didn't necessarily keep her cage in their home to make her feel this way, he took her out on multiple occasions which didn't entail the trips to the Night Care. It was just that, the wind was guiding, her adrenaline was high, and she felt like she was flying on trees back at Konoha.

Then she woke up from her daydream when she knocked into a tree.

Somehow she was caked with blood— how reminiscent— while being trudged towards somewhere that didn't have all the free space in the world to unleash her metaphorical wings. She was sure her father had his heart in a good place, but these injuries were quite literally baby food, nothing anyone would need to ban park time over.

However her allegedly *minor* injuries were stinging like a thousand wasps had decided to stab her, and she wanted to smack the nurse who was performing the task so immaculately. The cherry on top though? A tetanus shot on her tushy ass. Her father seemed highly amused by someone who was complaining about pneumonia and infections and park bans and whatnot.

That afternoon though, her father made her a special spaghetti mix and she didn't think any more pouting was necessary.

Asuka figured it was one of his spontaneous off days because he wasn't dressing her up for Night Care right after feeding her. On days like these, the things her father did were spontaneous too. It might be rearranging the family album with the latest batch of photos they took as she sat next to him, indirectly pointing at the ones she deemed worthy for the sole reason that he appeared to be developing an aneurysm while doing so.

Other times he'd just lay around the house like a slug while listening to depressing music, and she'd tried her hardest not to fall asleep in the middle of attempting to exercise her hands by trying a braid on his charcoal hair. There were also times her father would just play a 'movie' on the most fascinating device called the 'television' and she'd try to keep her interest on it, she did, but the light emitting from the device was so intense that she'd end up closing her eyes for a few moments and then bam! She'd be asleep.

It was surreal how easily she could sleep during the day.

Today, she allowed him to dress her in a stark yellow onesie before he set her down on the sofa, throwing a *don't-get-off-the-sofa* Look before venturing into the kitchen. In all honesty, she liked to do things just to spite him. It was just amusing how babies could do all sorts of shit and get away with it.

Her hands brushed over the chestnut-colored sofa, letting herself tilt to the armrest only due to the annoying body ache she was experiencing from the tetanus shot.... Or maybe she could fix that...

"Nice to see you listened." her father joined, the sofa sinking as the weight shifted, the smell of popcorn wafting in the air and distracting her from the concentration she should be having.

Asuka squawked at him. Voluntarily.

When the television blared open, she closed her eyes on impulse, then felt herself being tugged towards her father as he grunted something about bad posture. His cushy firmness was better than the sofa's, and the television blared with words she soon blurred out, placing her hand on the grazed knee, summoning her healing chakra on a whim.

One thing she learned very soon after coming into this world was that no one could see her chakra— and she learned it the heart-jolting way when she was conjuring up a good old mystic palm when Hizashi entered the room to check up on her sleeping status. For one whole minute she thought he was going to blow off her eardrums like the day she first called him 'Ee', but he just cooed in his usual voice and proceeded to ignore the very palpable green glow in her hand and picked her up from the cot to whisk her away to the living room.

So of course that revelation intrigued her, consequently her attempt of evoking two whole hands of healing chakra to which none of the three so much as blinked at. It was the same at Night Care, and her experiment on the streets just made people beam at her for

brandishing her odd dance.

Either way, it was beneficial for her if they didn't pick up on such things. And she didn't dwell on why the beings of this world didn't see the same thing as her, because, quite frankly, many peculiar things had occurred to her during her stay in this world and people not seeing her healing chakra were flopping down somewhere bottom on the list.

She let chakra slip into her body, scanning for an infection she knew wasn't there before guiding the warmth to weave under her skin. It wasn't the first time she was making use of this, but the same nostalgic rush always washed over her. She made sure not to heal it completely, working on her elbow, then closed up the cut on her toe to a significant amount, and did nothing about her busted lip because there wasn't any real discomfort coming off from the area.

When she opened her eyes, her father was peering at her.

She blinked back, trying to make sense of why he seemed to wear such a constipated look.

“...I'll take you out in the stroller tomorrow.”

*

“You're going to spoil her,” Shota grunted, slipping on his boots and tapping his foot on the stone ground.

Hizashi snorted from the sofa without looking up from braiding Asuka's hair, “As if you don't do that already.”

Shota stood up, readjusting the streams of his weapon as he slipped his silver goggles under them, “I don't spoil her.”

“Yeah, sure, whatever makes you *not* sleep at night,” Kayama waved

off lazily, “but which of these suits her better, the teal or the coral?” She showed them two frocks, shaking them with a deep frown adorning her face.

“Coral.”

“Neither.”

Kayama rolled her eyes, “Then why the hell do you have them? You’re just in a pissy mood ‘cos you can’t come with us— I’m going for the coral.”

“She doesn’t like frocks because they’re itchy.” Shota retorted, “Make her wear overalls.” he turned to leave, clutching the doorknob, then turned around once more, “And no more sweets for the day.” The door slammed shut after that.

“Heard that, bud?” Hizashi tied the end of the braid, “You’re papa said no more sweets for you.”

Kayama huffed amusedly, “Of course, there’d be no sweets. Shota hates anything strawberry flavored, I don’t imagine the cake from this morning just disappeared.”

“Yum.” Asuka croaked, voice heavy with the short nap she woke from.

On 29th January, morning 5:45 am, Hizashi and Kayama had barged into Shota’s apartment with a cake they ordered the previous night. Shota was peeved, but the man was easily peeved so it didn’t count for anything. Unfortunately, due to their pending shifts, he and Kayama had to leave right after cutting the cake and snapping some quick shots.

He did not doubt that Shota had a fantastic day of spoiling his daughter with all that he could. Numerous signs of it peeked around the apartment like the shiny, green boots neatly arranged by the doorstep, the foreign clothes washed and hung near the heater, a simple, emerald studded necklace adorning Asuka’s neck, and last, but most likely not the end of the list, the plethora of bright colored wrappers of sweets Asuka liked placed nicely near the rest of the garbage to be taken away.

(He’d have missed that if he didn’t manage to trip over it)

Hizashi squished the kid’s cheek because he couldn’t pat her head, “Of

course, it was, now let's get you dressed up for the best birthday ever!"

*

"This isn't working."

"Yeah, I don't think she likes dolls. Or the doll house. And Sho's already got her a tricycle. And she doesn't seem interested in blocks."

"She pushed away the Legos."

"And the rocking horse."

"What about the inflatable funhouse?"

"Oh, that's a good one!"

Kayama and Hizashi stood in a corner, discussing their mildly unsuccessful venture of spoiling Asuka.

Asuka already had art supplies like crayons and colored pencils, so they didn't feel the need to buy anything similar. They didn't even stumble into the stationery sections of the toy store at all. So far, all they got into the basket was multiple Edgeshot merchandise, two stuffed toys, one in the shape of an ugly slug, the other a stark, orange fox, and a jar of candy Eclairs. And the inflatable fun house.

It disappointed them a lot more than expected when Asuka didn't go spiraling around the store, touching everything she liked so that they could purchase it as they had initially intended. Well, maybe not everything, but maybe the majority. They still had rent to pay and debts to reimburse.

"We still have a few more stops," Kayama said, pacing her steps to match Asuka's as the one-year-old ambled about cheerfully, unknown of the dilemma they were facing

"Maybe Sho already brought her everything." Hizashi trudged after them while he pulled the basket behind him.

Kayama hummed wordlessly, the trio making their way to the cashier.

Hizashi heaved the basket on top of the metallic table, offering the cashier a smile.

“Sashi.” a low voice muttered, and Hizashi peered down to find emerald orbs glittering at him.

“Yes?” his smile widened, crouching to her height, then he had to stand up once more because the kid was yanking his mustard yellow parka towards what he figured to be the book section. He watched her tippy-toe, delicate fingers rising to barely brushing against the hardcover of her selected choice.

“...you want...this..book?” Hizashi blinked, struggling for his next words as the girl’s braids shook with her confirming nod. “And, um, you *can*, I’m assuming, Asuka-chan, *read* what’s on here? ‘History of Quirks and Evolution of Time?’” he took the book tinted with rainbow splashes all over.

Her excited face seemed to dwindle to a blank slate. Which was odd as fuck— but not as alarming as a one-year-old being able to *read*.

She wagged her finger at him.

“What?” Hizashi questioned, staring at her furrowed eyebrows.

“Prih-eey!”

Oh. Oh. The cover was *pretty*.

“Oh yeah!” he exclaimed, chortling at the initial stupid, unconventional thoughts he had. “It’s *totally* pretty. Absolutely gorgeous. Good job, Firefly!” He patted her cheeks lovingly before tucking the book under his arms, lightly guiding her to the cashier where Kayama managed the bill.

*

Her hand twisted in Hizashi’s golden locks peeking out his jungle green beanie, mentally berating herself over slipping up so badly. What the hell was she thinking when she showed him the book?! *Prih-*

ey?! Pretty?! She buried her cold face into his neck, wanting to scream out the sheer embarrassment prickling her bones.

“Are you okay, ‘suka-chan? Feeling sleepy?” Hizashi voiced.

No.

Feeling like an idiot? Yes.

Because she didn't want to cut the trip short, she perked up immediately latching her gloved hands on either side of Hizashi's face. He seemed to have gotten her message because the next thing she knew, he was stealing kisses all over her face. And she let him.

Hizashi was easily the most affectionate among her father's friends. Always cooing. Helping her run around the house after shifting much of her father's furniture. Twirling around until she felt dizzy, only to stop when her father smacked his monumental head. Purchasing her little accessory and trinkets that seemed to suit her. Experimenting with her hair and crooning about how lovely she looked no matter the hairstyle. Making her his special bite-sized pizza on Fridays and conjuring berry smoothies when she uttered the simple words ‘Riri’—her wording was *mortifying*, but it did the job.

“Oi, stare ahead.” Kayama's voice came from the side. She watched as Hizashi made a face at the woman. “Why'd you buy the book?” Kayama questioned, disregarding the kiddish face directed at her.

“Cos this little firefly wanted it.” Hizashi quipped back, bopping her nose. Asuka scrunched her face and buried her head where the warmth was once more. She in no way, shape, or form thought that she had the perfect mischievous baby persona going on. That was hard to pull when she was nineteen years. Soul-wise. Though the last thing she wanted people to think was that she was some prodigy in the making. To garner attention. Be under someone's scrutiny and surveillance like some lab rat.

Though despite all that, she couldn't hide her thirst for knowledge. Books were a sanctuary for her. And being a nerd in her previous life was an astronomical part of that. This world was still foreign to her, she was oblivious to many things while living in a safe bubble that her father and his friends provided.

There was so much to know here. Like how ‘quirks’ came to be, why did the big kids have their chakra expanding from their core and making themselves home in different parts of their body? Why did

Izuku and the rest have their cores tightly packed into a ball just above their navels? Why did that one adult who worked over at the big kid's section have a similar core as Izuku and the rest? Why did some people's chakra have colors and others didn't? Why did people with the faces of animals talk? Why couldn't normal stray cats talk? Why, why why,— so many *why*'s with no answers.

So when the book titled: History of Quirks and Evolution of Time grasped her attention among the other trinkets in the store, Asuka wanted it.

No.

Needed it.

It seemed like it would provide plenty of answers.

“Huh? Why’d she want a book?” Kayama asked.

“The cover was pretty.” Hizashi said, “It had these rainbow splashes like someone threw sponges at ‘em, must’ve caught her eyes.”

Kayama hummed something along the lines of ‘weird kid’, then smoothed over the back of the snow-white coat she was put into.

“Yeah.” Hizashi chortled, herself shaking due to his deep laugh, “For a second I thought she knew how to read.” No shit. If it weren't for her quick thinking, he might’ve just destroyed every single glass in the vicinity.

*

By the time Asuka passed the 2.5-year marker, she could somewhat talk normally. Not the usual moronic sounds like ‘*Riri*’ or ‘*Booboo*’ or ‘*prih-ee*’, she could form full sentences, though she had yet to have a firm grasp on some pronunciations. And Doctor Fusazane was acutely impressed by her verbal development, so much so that he was beaming when she replied ``How *are you doing today* with: ‘I ‘ave a terr’ble knee ach ‘cos I fell in th’ park!’

[I have a terrible knee ache because I fell in the park]

She was always tumbling around in that damn park for some reason.

Fusazane regarded her father with an impressed Look. "Asuka-chan's quite gifted, actually, not many kids her age can speak as she does."

"I know."

Asuka reeled back her head not so subtly on her father's chest. Fusazane laughed it off.

She wouldn't necessarily say being verbally advanced was anything to be wary about. Haruno Sakura was verbally advanced and that didn't make the people around her treat her any differently.

"Well, there's nothing wrong with her results," Fusazane said, closing her file, "Asuka-chan's perfectly healthy. Just keep doing what you're doing and everything will be fine!" he conveyed cheerfully.

When they left the doctor's office, both of them made their way out of the hospital, him keeping her close to his side while she stumbled about, clutching his shirt because he usually had to bend over whenever she reached for his hands. "Papa, I wanna eat somethin'," she said, hoping it was loud enough to be heard over the PA system announcing an emergency.

"You ate two burgers an hour ago." he deadpanned, tugging her to the side as a stream of nurses rushed through the hallway.

She scowled, being tiny was such a hassle. Yanking the end of his black shirt, she made him pick her up. "Buh that was an 'our ago!" she insisted. No way was she eating peas for lunch at her preschool when she could eat something unhealthily scrumptious. Like burgers.

The burgers were the best.

He snorted, peering at her with knowing gray eyes. "They'll serve food at your preschool."

Now, Asuka hated acting like a baby, (hate would be a strong word, maybe a minor dislike) but desperate times called for desperate measures. She circled her arms around him, nuzzling his neck, and squeezing tightly as she bubbled out a: "Please, papa? Pretty please wi'h a strawb'rry on top?"

“....you can’t coax me into feeding you a third burger. One is the limit. And you know why you got to eat two today, Asuka.” he grunted, and she felt movement as he started walking.

Asuka smirked victoriously, detecting the reluctance in his voice. Leisurely swinging her foot, she detached from the hug and blinked at him prettily, “‘cos I got my 'lood tak'n out t'day?”

“Yes.” her father said, avoiding her gaze as he stared ahead. Coward.

She stared more intensely, grabbing hold of both sides of his head to make his ash gray eyes focus on her, “You *sur*’ I can’t ‘ave ‘ny?”

His jaw tensed, “Even if you got your blood taken for testing, you’re not tricking me into getting another round of burger.”

Asuka pouted visibly, slumping on his shoulders as her feet brushed against his thighs much more aggressively.

The woes of being a child, fussing over mere food (Junk food). She could finally understand why children tended to spit out peas. They tasted bland. The more you chewed them, the more revolting it got. It wasn't like all the meals at her preschool were that unsavory though, Steak Fridays were okay, fish & chips Tuesdays were the most anticipated, and curry rice Thursdays were the best. So not all of her food choices were bad, per se, but this world had more variety to offer, and, well, it tasted eons better than the ration bars and rabbit meat she used to cram down her throat to keep up her gears running.

Though some irrational part of her brain prodded towards the period in her life where she was deprived of food for months after her (literally) tear-jerking arrival and thought maybe that was the reason she was so obsessed— *or maybe not*. It was only a month and a half, after all, that didn't even amount to the days she was punching holes into sticky white chest cavities, and then kneeling over anyone that didn't have uncanny reanimation eyes and the most vile white for skin, pumping healing chakra and mending their wounds as her blood coated hands hovered over their skin.

"Haruno-senpai! We got someone with pneumothorax over here!"

"Where's Shizune-senpai?!" she yelled back from her table without looking at the groaning Iwa-nin. The heat inside the tent was unbearable, perforating her in every direction as she wrenched the bubble of toxins out

with an exhausted heave. This was the seventh patient to come in poisoned, and the seventh fucking patient to glare at her like she was hurting them on purpose.

"At least give me knock me out!"

"Shizune-senpai is tending to another critical patient– Haruno-senpai! He's chalking up blood!"

"Give him a dose of doxycycline!" she called back, eyes focusing on the next bubble, simultaneously ignoring the jabs thrown her way.

Then her ears were ringing, and gleaming yellow eyes entered her vision—

“—suka? Asuka? Are you—”

She blinked, tilting her head at the way her foot dangled from the ground, not brushing against her father's baggy jeans when she wiggled them. It was odd. Why was her father holding her away from him while wearing the same look he had when she tended to run into things she was not supposed to?

“Papa?”

His thumbs tightened around her arm sockets and the remaining fingers around her back, relief blatant in his eyes. “Thank kami .” he said, bringing her close again, “I thought .. I thought you were having a seizure or somethin',” he mumbled, smoothing over her hair, placating himself more than herself. “Don't scare me like that you brat...”

Did she... zone out?...

Then he started walking again, mumbling words she couldn't decipher.

Later she got a guava smoothie and not a burger.

And then there were no peas to eat because her father took her home instead of school.

Asuka was aware that she was more of a mind-my-own business type when she wasn't inherently harassing people for their fascinating quirks (and it was quite literal in that context). Except now that she was capable of speech, she asked before grabbing hold of them randomly.

However, on Katsudon Wednesday, during recess, she wasn't looking for an adventure.

“So yer the brat ‘zuku keeps houndin’ me ‘bout?” a boy was speaking to her. A boy who had both hands on his hips, chest jutting out confidently, “What’s so special about’chu? *Huh?*” he taunted, ruby eyes gleaming and lips etched into a smirk as if he’d been promoted from genin to chunin on his first try.

Was he picking a fight?

“What? Nothin’ to say?” he prodded her.

She blinked, packing the sand-filled bucket with her neon shovel, “‘re you ‘zuku’s frien?” she shot back. Asuka had heard Izuku raving about his childhood friend on multiple occasions. *Kacchan’s so cool! Me an’ Kacchan are goin’ to be heroes together! Kacchan’s strong like you too, ‘suka-chan, he can beat up bullies like All Might! Kaachan says he’s goin’ to get a super cool quirk* — he forgot to mention Kacchan was also a little bitch, because he just mimicked her response with an unusually high-pitched voice that certainly wasn't hers.

“Ha?!” he shouted gratingly, “I’m not just his *friend*,’ ’ he mocked, taking a few steps into the sandbox. “I’m his *best friend* — ‘nd I heard how ya treat ‘im and it’s unac’petable!” he screeched some more, stomping his foot and scaring away some of the kids behind her.

Frankly, his voice was the only unacceptable thing here.

“Kacchan!” Izuku’s voice interrupted whatever verbal berating he had for her. Not that she was going to let that happen. The shovel in her hand was quite handy. “Don’t annoy ‘suka-chan!”

“But she steps on ‘yer face!” he yelled back.

“Cos I let her!”

“Well, ya shouldn’t have *let* her!”

Asuka blurred out the argument and focused on building a bucket castle. It was what kids her age did. Build fucking bucket castles. Though the sand could use some work, it was drier than her father's eyes on a bad day. She patted the last layer and smoothed over the surface before flipping the bucket at lightning speed. Smirking with victory, she tapped the bottom two times and pulled the bucket.

Then black boots squashed her castle.

“What ‘re ya laughin’ ‘bout? ‘Yer still not off the hook—”

The shovel in her hand somehow flew to his face.

Izuku's frantic cry echoed, *Kacchan* glowered at her, tackling her on the sandbox, screaming something about ‘*yer dead meat*’.

Asuka punched him, disorienting him for a second as she rolled out from the tackle, the next second her precious hair was being tugged and she laced her arms with strength, gripping his hand which held her hair, producing a war cry before throwing him over her shoulder and onto her destroyed castle.

*

Shota was sprinting to the preschool because his daughter gave someone a bloody nose.

He knew she was impulsive and rowdy, but god dammit she hadn't ever drawn blood.

Gathering his hair messily, he tied it up to a hopefully presentable ponytail all the while dodging a pregnant woman tumultuously talking into her phone. There was also an Owl mascot handing out something he didn't bother to read, stuffing it into his pocket instead, and when the bright yellow gates of the preschool came into view, he wondered what kind of hell awaited him.

“Fight me again ya brat!”

“Katsuki, are you out of your damn mind?!”

“Kacchan, I told you it won’t work like tha’.”

“Shut up ‘zuku, yer fightin’ me again!”

“Don't wanna.”

...and this was not the hell he envisioned.

“Oh, Aizawa-san.” the physically blockheaded principal acknowledged him, relief washing over his charcoal eyes.

“Papa!” his daughter waved at him, struggling to get out of her homeroom teacher’s hands. He took her into his arms, confusion steadily growing in his eyes. Soon, he was ushered to sit down, opposite to him was a kid with tissue stuffed up his nose, Katsuki, he recalled. Izuku from Night Care and a woman who looked like a direct replica of her son.

“Is she getting suspended?” Shota deadpanned seriously, focusing directly on Principle Mori.

“What? No, no!” Katsuki intervened, jumping from the sofa only to receive a firm smack to his head. “God dammit don't hit me!” he screeched, glaring at his visibly irked mother, “Tha’ brat can’t get suspended— I gotta win at lea’t once! FIGHT ME AGAIN—”

“STOP SCREAMING, YA TWERP!”

“KAA-CHAN, ‘YER THE ONE KILLIN’ MA EARS!”

“AND ‘YER THE ONE PICKIN’ FIGHTS WITH CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN YOU, ARE YOU A BULLY? DID I TEACH YOU THIS?”

“I DIDN'T START NO NOTHIN’, THAT GOOGLY-EYED BRAT PUNCHED ME FIRS’!”

“Right, aft’a you crumbled her castle’.” Izuku interrupted without breaking a sweat. Honestly, kudos to the kid. He looked down at his daughter to observe her reaction but only found her more interested in tinkering with his watch.

It’s not that this was the first time he received a complaint about her aggressive impulses. But it was the first time since he enrolled her in preschool. He was anticipating a fuming parent with a sobbing kid—but this? The victim himself demanding for a rematch because he had

lost the fight, his mother swatting his son over the head instead of boring holes into his skull, and Izuku swinging his legs as if this was a common occurrence.

It probably was.

“Can we please discuss this more civilly?” Principle Mori requested.

The question on his tongue didn't leave his lips before the woman clicked her tongue annoyedly. “Seriously, Mori-san? What's there to discuss? Katsuki was being a little shit, and he got what he deserved.” her eyes detached from the queasy-looking principal to him, then down to his daughter, “Asuka-chan, right?”

Asuka nodded, blinking blankly.

“Heard you attacked him ‘cos he ruined your sand castle. I know what an annoying brat he can be, but throwing things like that can be dangerous, alright? Friendly brawls are all good and all until someone lands in the hospital.” she beamed at his blank-faced daughter and Asuka cracked a smile (*she could've tossed the shovel hard enough to crack his skull, but this lady was nice and she wouldn't ever try to kill someone without a good reason*), nodding once more.

“See, it's all resolved, no need for anyone to get suspended!”

Soon after they exited the room and the halls began to file in with other parents hurrying to pick up their children. Shota turned to the woman he still didn't know the name of to thank her.

“No need to thank me. Aizawa-san, I'm Bakugou Mitsuki, by the way.” she grinned, patting his shoulder aggressively, “Katsuki's a loud kid, but he ain't that bad. I'm sure he'll apologize soon enough— that's if he's not going to insist on pestering Asuka-chan for a rematch.” Asuka surprisingly let Mitsuki tug at her cheeks without her *I-will-bite-you* gaze. “That was a nice shoulder throw you did there.”

“Shoulder throw?” his daughter was visibly avoiding his eyes now.

“Oh yeah,” Mitsuki drawled, “did a real clean shoulder throw when Katsuki tugged her hair, I saw the CCTV footage while waiting for you ‘cos ‘zuku-chan said the fight was awesome.”

What?

Katsuki and Izuku came bickering along the hallway, back from

retrieving their belongings. Mitsuki's attention focused on them, hauling their hero merch bags, both having All Might's face *cringworthingly* zoomed, and slung it over her shoulder, turning to leave, but not before directing a little wink at Asuka who flushed bright red.

"Bye 'suka-chan! Bye Oji-san!"

"I'll fight ya some other day!" Katsuki's voice echoed. He watched Mitsuki shake her head fondly before turning to walk over to Asuka's classroom to retrieve her belongings.

"A *shoulder throw* ?"

Asuka fumbled with his ponytail, "You have pretty hair, papa."

"Yeah, you're not getting out of this one."

*

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was mostly fluff.

I only proof read this once so sorry for the typos!

I also want to say that I AM reading all of your comments, your lovely, uplifting, and encouraging comments. But I haven't been able to respond to all of them since I've been swamped with assignments and homeworks and whatnots ♡♡♡

List of OC's:

Fusazane- pediatrician

Mori- principal of pre-school

Hope this was a good read!

To be Quirkless

Chapter Summary

Things happen.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

June 26th, 3096

“There’s plenty of space under the bed,” Asuka said, one cheek inflated from the lollipop she was suckling.

Shota gave her an unimpressed stare, “Or we can just come back later.”

“Of course, I know that!” his somehow not-diabetic daughter retorted, pulling out the mango lollipop from her mouth and pointing it towards the fifty percent off Twinkies. “But it’s on *sale* right now, papa, it’s a win for everyone!”

“I have enough money, and the only win *someone* gets is to eat sweets until their teeth rot.”

She huffed, “It doesn’t matter how much money you have if you’re blowing off a sale.”

He crouched down to her height, the heels of his boots touching the wheel of the cart he was shoving around, “I’m not blowing off a sale. We just don’t need it right now.”

“Kayama-oba says you’re a miser.” She pulled out an empty stick from her mouth, wearing a disappointed face.

“Asuka, that’s not —” Sometimes he wondered what kind of crap his friends fed her when he wasn’t around— “We’ll have this conversation later.” There was too much to unpack from that topic, like how she wasn’t *supposed* to be disappointed when Kayama’s words turned out

to be false. Did she even *know* what a miser meant? He picked her up to place her in the children's compartment of his cart before thrusting it forward.

Fortnightly, Saturday mornings were spent grocery shopping. Before Asuka, there wasn't much need for groceries. Maybe he would go out once a month and stock on enough ramen and mint ice cream to keep himself from having to go out frequently, other times Kayama and Hizashi would bring ingredients to make a 'healthy' meal, either way, he hardly went anywhere that wasn't school, his interning agency, and the patrols he was chronically assigned. But since Asuka enjoyed the outdoors as much as he preferred indoors, he figured there wasn't much to think about the matter.

"Papa, why is 'ur hero outfit black?"

Asuka was also very talkative when she wanted to be. He kept pushing the cart as he swiped a bottle of olive oil from the rack, "It's easier to blend in with the night."

"Then what about *now* ? It's not night time and you're still wearin' black." He felt the back of her head meet his chest before he grabbed two packs of Yakult milk. "Is black your favorite color? Is that why you were lots of black? Kayama-oba said her favorite color's purple and 'zashi-oji said his is magenta, I thought it'd be yellow or somethin' but he doesn't wear lots of magenta like Kayama-oba wears purple." Adjusting his hold so that her back wouldn't collide with the handle, he snagged a packet of salt and tossed it in the cart.

His favorite color? He didn't *think* he favored black over other colors. He owned plenty of gray sweaters, and a countable amount of white shirts, then there was the rare suit he wore for special occasions, two slacks for similar reasons, and a plethora of black-sleeved shirts because they were on sale and were plenty comfortable. He also had a hideous yellow shirt tucked somewhere in the closet that he never planned on wearing, red and gray workout outfits, shorts, and pants in pale sets because they were *also* on sale. Sure his wardrobe entailed mostly of darker shades, but he wouldn't necessarily say he *loved* the color black to the point where it was his favorite color. The color he loved, was more *vibrant* , it wasn't something he'd inherently wear, but it was more of... more of what it *reminded* him of.

"But you know somethin', papa?" Asuka spoke before he could answer, "Black's not a color. I read that it's the *absence* of color or somethin', so if that is your favorite color, then you should say it's

your favorite *shade* .”

A smile tugged his lips. “Then it’s good that black isn’t my favorite *shade* .”

At that, her head whipped at him, jeweled eyes bulging as her mouth gaped open. “Papa... just... *why?* ” She appeared frustrated. A prickle of confusion stabbed his back.

“Why what?” He shot back, exiting the aisle and detouring to the counter with the least amount of people.

She faced forward at that, mumbling incoherently. He caught on to ‘*lost*’ and the pieces suddenly fit together.

“What’d you bet about this time?”

She huffed, her legs swinging annoyedly, “Anmitsu once every week for the rest of the month.”

He needed Kayama and Hizashi to stop encouraging stupid bets for sweets.

“Kayama-oba said there’s *no way* your favorite color would be black and she wouldn’t tell me the reason and ‘zashi-oji said it was black because ‘*what other color would it be?!*’ ,” Her impression of Hizashi was flawless to the point where he looked away from her expertly contoured face to mask a snort, “So now ‘zashi-oji owes her money and I owe her a back massage, which isn’t so *bad* , but...” she trailed off, peering at him, “But what *is* your favorite color?”

Right at that moment, the customer in front of him moved and he shoved his cart into the slot.

“Green,” he said, lending a hand to the cashier as he took out the products from the cart, “My favorite color is green.”

He didn’t see her expression because the cashier asked him whether he’d heard about the latest coupon promotion and he had politely accepted whatever card they gave him to fill, tucking it somewhere in his pocket to be forever forgotten.

When the last of the items had been emptied, he picked up a weirdly buoyant Asuka and placed her on the ground. After the payment was confirmed, he gathered all the bags from the counter and held them in one hand, and Asuka’s in the other.

“Papa,” Asuka called out to him

He hummed in answer and the sensor doors slid open, allowing them to exit the store.

“ *I love you.* ”

And she pulled her hands out of his, stumbling about in the opening and reaching where he parked his bicycle.

....why was that kid so *random*?

He followed after as if he didn't just *pause* for thirty seconds and piled the bags in the basket, hanging the ones he couldn't fit on the handle, all the while staring at the glowing face of his daughter who seemed to be *too* happy for someone who had lost her weekly anmitsu cups. He unlocked the bicycle and swept her off her feet to settle her in her seat.

“I don't have a fever,” she narrowed her eyes at him, “If that’s what you're thinkin’.”

"I know." Shota snorted, clasping the locks and tightening the straps. Then he ruffled her hair before kissing the top of her head, "And I love you too kiddo."

Asuka beamed.

He climbed on his seat, an overwhelmingly fuzzy warmth spreading inside his chest as he pedaled away to their home.

26th August, 3096

Asuka loved Bakugou Mitsuki. She reminded her of a version of Tsunade. Commandeering, aggressive, illogical at times, a force to be reckoned with, and subjected her son to a variation of tough love more often than not. Now, compared to her, Midoriya Inko was a lovely ball of fluff. *Sometimes* . She could be pretty scary if she wanted to be like the time she found out about the trio managing to topple an entire sugar container during an unintended pillow fight and Asuka could see vague flashes of *Kijo* on her normally soft face. Heck even Katsuki tended to exert sweetness to a degree he didn't even express to

his mother around her.

“— Okay so I’m goin’ to be the hero ‘cos I’m the only one with a quirk right now, and Nerd’s going to be the civilian, and Time bomb, your role is goin’ to be the villain.”

“Why am *I* always the civilian?”

“Yeah, and why am *I* always the villain?”

Playdates were nothing uncommon. Normally, her father chaperoned these because both women worked during the day, but today, Mitsuki was hosting it in her backyard while they were being supervised by Masaru, Katsuki’s overly submissive father. The good thing about the Bakugou household was that they produced the most exquisite snacks which she often had a hard time pronouncing, and nothing was better than snacks after a long day of playing.

“I just *told* you why!” Katsuki yelled defiantly, “ *I’m* the oldest and *I* have the coolest quirk, so right now, *I’m* the most fit to be the hero!”

Ever since Katsuki got his quirk, his for-some-reason already inflated ego had taken a double roast and a deep fry, parading his pop rocks resembling quirk everywhere he went. Both he and Izuku had moved on to kindergarten, but she didn’t have to inquire about Katsuki’s demeanor from Izuku to know he must have acquired quite the fan base to triple-fry his enlarging confidence, and while Izuku highly encourage this behavior, she wasn’t amused.

“A quirk isn’t the *only* thing that makes you a hero.” Asuka snapped, folding her arms across her chest. “Empathy, modesty, kindness, fairness, humility— *lots* of other things are needed if you want to be a hero like All Might. You’ve been playing the hero *every* other time we played, and that’s hardly fair for the two of us.” She stomped a step forward to make her point and watched Katsuki flush.

Izuku nodded aggressively. Katsuki’s cowardly father ducked behind the magazine he was reading. “*But—* I am— *fine!*” he reluctantly gave in, “*You* can be the hero in this round and I’ll... I’ll play the villain,” he said as if it burned his tongue.

Asuka wondered what was so bad about playing the villain.

“Izuku can be the hero,” she said, not caring to play the hero part.

The sizable backyard was turned upside down within hours of the

play. Turns out, villain Katsuki was just as determined as hero Katsuki to quintessentially exhibit his role and did everything in his power to make Hero Izuku's attempts to save her futile. By the time they decided to call it quits, both boys were sweating from head to toe, and she was also drenched because she had happened to be perched up in the stuffy tree house while waiting for Izuku to save her.

Mitsuki made them take a bath right after that, coaxing her into some uni-sex clothes Katsuki had which were unsurprisingly big on her. Then they were seated around the warm lighted dining room with perfectly cut sandwiches, fist-sized cookies, and warm milk.

"Kacchan, you should be the villain next time too," Izuku said, munching on a sandwich, spilling crumbs all over his shirt.

Katsuki didn't blow up at that, "Well, I *did* make a good one, didn't I?"

"And Asuka-chan should be a side-kick, bein' civilian is no fun." The green-haired boy continued.

Picking up an egg sandwich, she bit half of it in one bite. He was right about that, she was a sitting duck this time while both of them played an aggressive game of tag. She nodded, showing her approval of the suggestion. "Oh right, I got this cool clip of All Might saving five people at once—" and she listened to the rest while finishing half the things they didn't care to touch.

If she was being truth full, she didn't get all the hype around that man. What was so special about a man clad in colorful spandex with super strength? Tsunade had super strength, *she* had super strength, and both Guy and Rock Lee were also forced to be reckoned with. And enhanced-strength type quirks were relatively normal from what she found out.

She wasn't dissing them for idolizing a hero, plenty of kids their age did that. But even though she liked Edgeshot, she didn't adhere to worshiping him as both Katsuki and Izuku did. Liking Edgeshot was one thing, and purchasing items with his face was an entirely different thing, but she was a three-year-old child and couldn't afford to lose the few strands of '*I'm a perfectly sane child with the memories lasting from the time I spent in my darling mother's womb*' tightly grasped within her fingers. She knew her father and Kayama and Hizashi thought her to be weird, but all children were weird in some sense, right?

"— you just see Kacchan, I'm goin' to get a *really* cool quirk, maybe a variation of both fire breathing and telekinesis, or just telekinesis. I

don't have much workin' over Tou-chan's quirk, but fire breathing sounds pretty cool too. You know, I think Kaa-chan's quirk could be terrifying if she decided to be a hero, and she has the type of quirk that just grows stronger with every usage. Kaa-chan's too much of a law-abider, which is a *good* thing, but one time she took me to the park and this nii-san's frisbee was coming my way and she managed to throw it off like a million meters away from the park. She apologized lots of times for that though, and the nii-san didn't take it to heart 'cos I almost got hit."

"Inko-oba's awesome." Katsuki acknowledged, nodding promptly.

She grabbed two cookies from the plate. That she was.

"Hey nerd, are you gettin' any pre-jitters these days? Like a funny feeling behind your neck or tingling in your palm?"

She downed half of the milk and chewed her way through a third cookie.

Izuku shook his head, his fluff of green swaying like trees lulling to the wind. "Nothing like that. Kaa-chan says not everyone gets the pre-jitters during their first few months, you were really lucky, Kacchan."

Katsuki puffed his chest like a peacock and said words contradicting his actions. "It's alright, the *important* thing is, we'll both become heroes together!"

Ah, children were so precious. She finished the rest of her milk and produced a loud burp.

"Sorry, Time bomb, even if your battle moves are kick-ass, you're like a year younger than us, so we can't become heroes together." his voice was uncannily soft so she decided against telling him what was on the tip of her tongue.

"But we'll be waiting for you to catch up!" Izuku cheered.

"I'm not so sure 'bout that." she shot back haughtily, a teasing smile splayed on her face.

Izuku laughed and Katsuki rolled his eyes. Then not even two minutes later they were screaming at her for—

"You intolerable foodie! Cough up all the damn cookies!"

“Asuka-chan, that was so not cool! We barely had two bites!”

She shrugged, “No one told you guys to rave about All Might during tea time.”

February 28th, 3097

The bed was clad in simple white sheets, a jungle green comforter neatly folded at the end with plenty of pillows stacked against the headboard— plenty of pillows not entailing the plushies of slugs and hawks and *Edgeshot* and foxes with wide grins. It wasn't pushed to a corner like his other one either, instead, it was in the middle.

There was no wardrobe, but a walk-in closet a couple of meters left from the view of the bed hung with his clothes and not looking quite as packed as he expected it to— no pinks or yellows or pales or sparkles, just *his* dark shades of clothes, boots and hero equipment.

Right next to it was the door leading to a bathroom, void of the white tiles he was accustomed to and replaced with a Maya blue, an odd-looking bowl for a sink in substitute for his common pedestal one, and a spacy cupboard right under the counter holding the sink, supplied with bottles of shampoo, shower gel, shaving cream, toothpaste, and toilet paper. Towels hung in the loops and bars, the shower curtain taken down as soon as he started on repacking because it rattled too much for his liking, the toothbrush holder on the wall contained a sole white toothbrush with a new tube of toothpaste— missing a bright red toothbrush next to it.

There was no dresser table either, just a side table next to his bed and another rectangular, rosewood table that had a fluffy-looking chair pushed inside it, his laptop, rare cosmetics, and porcelain, handleless mug filled with hair bands were the only things he organized on the table.

The room was bare, so bare that he was getting irked by the second. He pushed himself off the bed and landed his feet on the gray vinyl floor, seemingly laid to complement the Mauve painted on the walls— so, so different from the dark beige carpet and the misty walls— gripping one side of the bed, he pushed it against the wall with no effort and gave similar treatment to the side table keeping his phone plugged into charge.

Much better.

“Sho, are you done?!” Hizashi’s voice resounded,

Footsteps thudded the gray flooring and Hizashi’s face peeked from the door, his lazy bun toppling to his forehead from the way he hung from the doorway. “Wow! Good job on repacking— Asuka-chan’s almost done too, she’s very intent on organizing her book sayin’ they *had* to be in alphabetical order,” Hizashi laughed.

Shota’s mouth stretched into an amused smile, “Anyways, Kayama’s settin’ the table, so get somethin’ in your system before we start on the living room and the kitchen.”

“I’ll be there.” he agreed, and Hizashi went as soon as he came.

Stopping at the opened door near the start of the hallway, he leaned on the frame and observed the girl who was intently shoving books on her shelf. “Papa, two of my books are missing,” she said without looking up, “and it’s not in the rest of the boxes.”

“I’ll stop by there later,” he said, eyes going over the intricately organized room. Yellow daffodil walls highlight the white furniture of the room, her bed neatly made from where he stood, covered with a plethora of plushies. The connecting ladder which led to the bed was designed with little flowers, all different shades of yellow and intertwined in a swirl, painted on one side and twirling to the bottom. Probably Kayama’s work.

Under the bed was a spacey cupboard, all her clothes arranged color-wise, boots stacked tidily, her bags arranged in some kind of hanger hanging with cloth boxes, courtesy of Hizashi, he presumed. Next to the convenient bed was a table, a pine table adorned with her school books, a cerulean lamp, a stationery holder with Edgeshot doing his dumb signature move, and a tablet that she rarely used.

The bookshelf was conveniently next to her study table, Asuka still crouching over her books with a frown marred on her face, opposite to that was the bathroom, the door similarly designed as the ladder, except this one was painted as a floral wreath. Alongside the bathroom door was her dresser, filled with too many things he lacked.

“Okay.” her reply came to him, her twin tails brushing along her back as her head turned to regard him. Then they both exited the sunny room to cross the living room, reaching for the four-chair dining table

to eat the take-out Kayama organized.

“You know what? I think it’s time I moved too.” Hizashi commented, ripping a naan into half and dipping it in butter chicken.

Kayama snorted, “How many times have you said that in the last few years?”

“Hey, I might live with my kaa-chan, but at least *I* still know the basic skills for livin’” he threw back, plopping an extra piece of butter chicken in his mouth, and chewing excessively slowly to prove his point.

Shota knew where this was heading.

“There are more *important* things than knowing how to cook!”

“It ain’t *only* about the cookin’!”

“What, you expect to cook just because I’m a *woman* ?!”

“Don’t put words in my mouth!”

“But that’s sure as hell what you’re insinuating.”

“I didn’t insinuate anythin’!! You’re the one shitting on me for living with my kaa-chan!”

“How dare you—”

“Shitty cook!”

“Shitty glasses!”

“Says *you* — ”

“Can you both shut up and eat?” Shota demanded.

Both adults huffed at each other before returning to their food. Shota tore a palm-sized naan, placing half of it on Asuka’s empty plate.

There was a short silence for a while, a comfortable one despite both his friends’ stupid squabble before—

“I have a question,” Asuka said, blinking up at him. Then shifted her gaze to Kayama who tilted her head, and Hizashi who raised his brows as if to encourage her. “What happens to quirkless people?”

A tense silence spread.

....why was she asking that? Did something happen at school? But it hadn't even been more than a month since she turned four, why was she worrying about not having a quirk? But the way she said, What happens to quirkless people? She was a fourth-generation kid, the likelihood of them being quirkless was second to none... and yeah he knew the fate of some people— kids, teenagers, and rarely adults with the same circumstances, and...and all of them needed severe help because the society didn't treat them right for things they couldn't control.

“...is there a context to this question?” Kayama’s voice brought him out of his thoughts.

The hurt in her eyes didn't go unnoticed by any of them.

“Is someone bullying you, Firefly?” Hizashi questioned gently.

She twisted the hem of her shirt, “I don’t think I was *supposed* to hear this, but Utano-baa and Yumena-nee were talkin’ about how Nanami-nee killed herself.” Her glassy eyes met Shota’s, and his insides twisted. “They were really sad that they didn't notice anything wrong with her because they *knew* she was quirkless, but... but what does being *quirkless* have to do with anything? It doesn't make sense that she killed herself because she was quirkless and... and I just thought she was on a vacation because she hadn't been comin’ in recently.” Shota saw the fear stream in her eyes, fear so palpable and vulnerable that made his heart unsettled.

He stretched his hand and smoothed over back.

“Papa,” she said it so lowly that he barely heard it, “if being quirkless means you’re going to kill yourself someday, does that mean Izuku’s going to kill himself too?”

“ *What?* ” he said before he could stop himself.

“Izuku, papa, Izuku is quirkless, and I don't want him to *die*— ”

“No, no, no, Firefly.” Hizashi took over, taking her hand in his as he made her look at him, “You know what being quirkless is, don’t you?” he questioned first. Asuka nodded. Shota pulled back his hand and wiped it over his shorts, rubbing off the accumulating sweat.

“Then you must *also* know that there’s only a very little percentage in

Japan that holds that status?" Asuka nodded this time too.

Hizashi's face twisted into a wounded expression, "Then did you know that they're not treated that kindly?"

"Why?"

"Because people are assholes."

"Kayama!"

She wasn't wrong.

"What? It's true." Kayama stated, her underlying anger was unmissed. She regarded Asuka with a softer gaze. "Listen, hun. Quirkless people get bullied, they get abused, suicide baited, *ostracised*, and most of them don't even reach adulthood because they either pass from killing themselves, or someone else kills them because they think quirkless people are beneath living and breathing the same air as them." Kayama exhaled deeply, oddly looking as if she was about to cry.

"I was a late bloomer." she said, "An *extremely* late bloomer. I got my quirk at the age of seven." she laughed mirthlessly, one which made Hizashi wince. " *Kami* did I get shit for that." Kayama didn't elaborate, leaning in so that she was near Asuka. "Your Nanami-nee may have stuck out till adulthood, and she was a damn strong woman for doing so, but people are quirkist and that's the reality."

There was silence for a while. Asuka's green orbs were eerily vacant of emotions, and Hizashi hadn't let go of her hands, but the grip hadn't slackened.

"Okay," she said finally, voice firm and unwavering. "Nanami-nee died because people are quirkist assholes, and Izuku isn't going to because I'll protect him."

The tension in his chest dispersed, replaced with a large bout of pride. Hizashi smiled brightly, conveying just how precious her words were, and Kayama's expression was soft, a light smile etched on her face.

"No swearing." Hizashi reprimanded gently, squeezing her hands and patting her shoulder.

"Butt hole."

A muffled squawk escaped Kayama before she was looking the other

way.

“That isn't any—”

“Excretion hole. Anus.”

Shota tugged her ear, “Okay, smart ass, now eat your food.”

The ambiance took a lighter turn from there. Asuka heartily ate the naan, dipping it with another curry that had goat meat. Hizashi chatted loudly about a new side-kick that joined their agency who had the ‘*coolest donkey imitation*’ he had yet to see, and Kayama was not entirely enthusiastic, and her jabs at Hizashi were weaker than normal, but he supposed she'd be alright.

*

It was when they were tidying up that the next question of interest rose.

“Isn't Izuku still four years old?” Hizashi asked absentmindedly, shoving dirty paper plates into a plastic bag.

Asuka, who was helping with transporting the leftover into Kayama's hand, slowed her pace to the kitchen, “He's turning five in July. Why?”

Hizashi hummed, “‘cos the kid might be a late bloomer, he still has a few months left, why do you think he's quirkless?” he snagged the rest of the used utensils and pushed them inside the bag, regarding Asuka with a curious gaze as he tied the bag.

Shota closed the tub of leftover saag paneer and waited till Asuka made her way to him. “Because his okaa-san took him to the hospital,” she answered simply, taking the containing from him. “Katsuki got his quirk just a few weeks after he turned four and Izuku said he told his okaa-san to take him to the hospital ‘cos he wasn't even getting the pre-jitter thingamajig before kids got their quirks.” She handed it to Kayama, snatching a packet of vanilla milk from the fridge right before Kayama closed it.

“He has two joints in his pinky.” she poked a hole in her packet, unbeknownst to the barely tangible dismay that took over Hizashi's face, and Kayama's evident flinch. “And his appendix is still intact.”

Oh.

The boy wasn't even a *late bloomer*.

In rare cases did double jointed individuals developed a quirk, but the appendix was supposed to diminish months after a child turned one, and never had anyone ever sprouted a quirk after discovering a fully sound appendix.

“Izuku hasn't told Katsuki ‘bout it though, he thinks Katsuki will be disappointed in him ‘cos they both decided to be heroes together and now he can’t, which is bull excretion!” (bullshit)

Shota didn't say *language*, but he did give her a pointed glare. Not that she noticed because she was walking back and forth in a frustrated manner and sucking on the straw till it started to produce glitches. “Izuku can be *who* he wants to be regardless of some *appendix* or *stupid toe joint*! Why can’t he be a *quirkless* hero?” her gaze intensified on Shota and he blinked, “Don't you fight quirkless anyways, papa? And Izuku is plenty smart.” (smart than most halfwits, but she decided against saying it out loud) “And *if* Katsuki turns out to be a two-faced lizard who can’t accept his best friend for who he is then I’m going to —” and she was gathered into familiar soft arms, a head nudging against hers.

“God you’re so *precious* , Asuka.” Kayama chuckled, rubbing her cheek against the four-year-old’s.

Hizashi sniffed, “She grew up so fast!” and Shota felt Hizashi hug his waist, burying his head into his stomach.

That she did. He patted the other man's head gingerly, nostalgia filling his heart as he witnessed Kayama snuggling his daughter. She was small before, barely weighing anything, screaming at him for bottles. Now she was over three feet and angry over the reality of her friend being subjected to prejudice.

She was growing up to be a fine kid.

March 5th, 3097

It was a beautiful day, birds were chirping, trees were rustling to a gentle breeze, squirrels tittered outside their burrows, the overgrown grass tickled her shin, a stray cat was tending to her litter of kittens,

and Katsuki looked close to having a seizure.

“You— *q-quirkless* - *what?* That doesn't make any sense— how can— *you're fucking lying* , this *has* to be a joke— Izuku, you can't just *not* have a quirk!” Asuka watched as he stuttered words of bamboozlement, his face twisted to extreme confusion and denial as Izuku looked close to tears.

Here in the unkempt fields is where Izuku introduced them to a not-so-secret base where they could play and spend their days lazily. Here she read books at leisure without interruption. Here she debated about quirks with Izuku while Katsuki called them nerds. Here she managed to beat Katsuki every time he insisted on fighting. Here they played heroes and tag with the many neighborhood kids.

“I-It's true, Kacchan, I don't have one. I'll n-never have one.” Izuku said, voice brittle.

“No.” Katsuki said, “No, no, no, this *has* to be a lie— there's *no way* you're quirkless— you can't be quirkless!”

“I don't want to be quirkless either!” Izuku screamed back.

Her heart tugged for him as she patted his shaking back, wordlessly comforting him.

“But...but— how're we going to be heroes if you don't have a quirk?” Katsuki questioned, his voice holding despondency, ruby eyes staring at Izuku with mixed emotions.

Izuku smiled despite the tears in his eyes, “We can *still* be heroes, Kacchan, I... I just won't have a quirk, but that's fine, right? I could be the f-first quirkless hero—”

“You can't be a hero if you're quirkless!” Katsuki bellowed, anger pouring out of his tone. Asuka felt Izuku lean into her touch more than before, blatant hurt overtaking the forced happiness within moments. “There's no such thing as a *quirkless* hero! You can't be a hero anymore dammit, all you are now is some *Deku*— ”

“Asuka-chan!”

Her fist collided with his face, making him slip over a root prodding from the ground. “Call him that again and I *guarantee* you won't have teeth by the time I'm done with you.”

If this was the usual brawl, he would be jumping up to his feet and aiming a punch which she would conveniently dodge, but he just stared at her with incensed eyes, cupping his cheek which took the blow of her punch. “He is a Deku, he doesn't have a fucking quirk so that makes him a *Deku* .”

Her second punch was only stopped due to Izuku's tearful interference.

“Fuck you and your shallow friendship, Bakugou Katsuki.” she spat, glaring at him with all the hate she could muster up.

There was a time she was blind to prejudice, too happy living in her head to focus on anything around herself, but she wasn't the same as before. She wasn't four-year-old Haruno Sakura, she was four-year-old Aizawa Asuka and she'd be damned if she let her friend get shit on for something as trivial as not having a stupid *quirk*. “Izuku *will* be a hero. The first ever quirkless hero and he'll outrank *you*, or any other shitty fuck face who's got to say otherwise, and he's *not* going to stay here and listen to you any longer just because you *happened* to be his best friend— which you aren't now, I'm sure, from the way you just berated him.”

“I get that you're hurt and confused because you *think* your dreams aren't reachable anymore, but have you ever wondered how Izuku must've felt? How *he* was feeling when he was diagnosed as quirkless? How *he* was feeling when his dreams crashed before his eyes all because he has double-jointed toes and a useless appendix?! Have you *ever* once put aside your feelings and considered him? Have you ever stopped to think that calling him *deku* is the worst thing you can do right now?” The freckled boy's sniffs made it into her ears, and her glare intensified on the defiant boy sitting on the ground.

“Shut the hell up!” Katsuki screamed, pushing himself off the ground, “Quirkless people *can't* be heroes and you can't change my mind! *Izuku can't be a hero if he's only going to end up dying!* ”

Oh .

Something clicked in her mind. Something that made her expression melt off from raging anger to uncommitted blank. She took a step towards the enraged boy, one which easily made Izuku tighten his hold on her forearm, but she tugged him along with her, stopping only once till she and Katsuki were an adult-sized palm away from each other.

“What? You’re going to hit me again?” the blond squawked, and she knew he wasn’t feeling as confident as his words because his fists were shaking beside him.

She whacked his head to confirm his claim. “If you’re worried for him stop blurting out stupid shit.”

He opened his mouth, but she cut him off before he could speak. “I don’t care what *you* think. Izuku said he wants to be a hero then he *will* be a hero if he changes his mind and wants to be an accountant, then he’ll be an accountant, and if he wants to be the president, then he’ll be the fucking president, you and I have no right to tell him what he should or shouldn’t be just because we have quirks and he doesn’t. No matter how *dangerous* it might be for him, Izuku’s the one who can decide *what* he wants to do with his life. *We’re* supposed to support him, that’s what friends do. And you better start acting like a good one before Izuku passes out from crying.”

“I’m n-n-not cry-cryin’”

“And I fart butterflies.”

Shortly after, Asuka witnessed history’s most bashful apology, having to stifle a laugh when Izuku hugged a flustered Katsuki with tears and snot lacing every inch of his face.

On the way home, she bought snacks with her allowance.

“H-hey Asuka-chan.” Izuku called out with a hoarse voice, “Earlier you said *we* have quirks, does that mean you got yours too?”

Katsuki’s gaze flickered at her and she noticed the developing bruise on his baby skin. Asuka bit her ice cream. “I meant ‘we’ as in the general population. I don’t have a quirk.” she answered simply, then halted Katsuki by pulling the scruff of his shirt.

“What the hell are you—” he shut up when her free hand grazed over the cheek she punched earlier. Izuku ceased his walking next to him, curiously peering at why Asuka was fondling the other boy’s cheek.

Then she stopped, striding along the uncrowded pavement as if nothing happened and Izuku stared at his friend’s cheek in awe, “Kacchan, your bruise.” his eyes glimmered, “It’s gone. ”

“Oh yeah,” Katsuki said, jutting his tongue at the injured cheek, “It doesn’t hurt anymore.”

"I don't think Asuka-chan knows she has a quirk," Izuku said, licking the side of his ice cream.

"Or she knows and she's fuckin' with us." he retorted, biting off a large portion of his popsicle.

Izuku giggled, "That *does* seem more like her."

September 13th, 3097

No one in the world knew everything, and that applied to Asuka as well. There were still many terms she was foreign to despite the mingling she did with her year mates. Katsuki and his mother were also another source of learning in areas her father wouldn't quite like. Inko's bookshelf was filled with a plethora of educational books and she made sure to inhale the words when she could. Izuku's journals were another source despite his less-than-neat handwriting.

This particular knowledge, though, she acquired when she went about on an innocent stroll to the convenience store she frequented to purchase her daily dose of sweets.

Now, *normally* Asuka minded her own business when faced with flamboyant strangers, but this one was hard to ignore. The woman had bright pink hair, brighter than the shade she had in her previous life, her face was a pretty heart shape, her brows were lined sharply, and her almond eyes were a flaming orange radiating a glow that *should've* been hard to accomplish during the day with the sun blazing about.

Her nose was straight, cheeks were perfectly peachy, and plump lips painted in a bold shade of black, somehow achieving to compliment the ostentatious golds and bronze of her eyelids. That was only her face. Albeit having dressed much more modestly compared to her face with a simple, white, halter neck dress that reached her mid-thigh, her handbag was an entirely different matter. Asuka didn't know whether they were real or not, but she *did* have to blink several times because the gems on the bag were making her eyes hurt. Despite all of that, what made her stop and stare was the huge wad of cash she was fanning herself with, her elegantly manicured fingers holding the money as if it were dealing with cards.

“What’re *you* staring at?” she had asked, a smug grin tugging at her face as if she wasn’t announcing people nearby to rob her.

Asuka didn’t answer because she couldn’t possibly say ‘*I’m staring at you because you stick out like a sore thumb.*’ So she promptly turned to leave after dipping her head respectfully, but the lady decided to call her out.

“You’re *curious*, aren’t you? About how I came to possess this much money.” The lady huffed like a peacock, and she didn’t know how to relay that she wasn’t curious at all. Just a little concern for her overall well-being. “It’s all right, I’ll tell you. But I can’t assure you that you can find the same success *I* did, because, well, you’re a kid.” Her long lashes fluttered haughtily, expertly snapping her innovative cash fan in a single file. “The answer is—”

“What’s a sugar baby?” Asuka inquired, blinking up at the adults in the room as she ceased her coloring. The answer the lady gave her wasn’t the least bit satisfying. What the heck did being a *sugar baby* mean? And why did that profession earn so much money? It made no sense. Though judging by the way Hizashi appeared horrified, Kayama seemed highly amused, and her father only blinked at the question, she decided the answer must be something extremely unfitting to the name given to it.

“...it’s someone who’s involved in a type of... *transactional* dating, commonly between old rich people and a younger person in need of financial aid.” her father chose his words carefully, cutting the suspenseful silence. “Might include normal dating, sexual favors or—

“SHO!”

“What? It’s not like there’s a nicer word for ‘*sexual*’.”

“You think that’s the problem?!”

“You’re right, Sho, you should’ve used the words ‘*intimate*’ or ‘*erotic*’, it’s much more appropriate than sexual.”

“What the hell is wrong with the both of you?!”

Well, that wasn’t the answer she was expecting. A sugar baby was essentially a prostitute then. Still, that was a weird choice of words for something so simple. She voiced her concern which made Hizashi’s frazzled expression turn a notch up high.

“Okay— *how* the hell do you know that word?!”

“Language.” she reprimanded jokingly.

“It’s different.” her father answered, unsurprisingly calm. He always told her what she wanted to know. “They normally stick to one rich individual. Why the sudden questions?”

She told them a short and sweet version of her encounter, watching their faces turn slightly ugly. Then decided none of them were going to talk before she picked up a lively pink color pencil to fill in a pair of shoes.

Pink was a nice color.

Pink was also a color that was strongly tied to her past life. Pink held many memories she kept near to her heart. Pink was feminine. Pink was what her hair used to be, a lovely pink. She turned pink easily when Sasuke used to sneer at her, something which she easily deluded herself to think was his way of paying attention to her.

She turned the same pink when Naruto consistently asked for dates which irked her. She turned pink whenever Lee declared his love for her with no shame whatsoever, and he was a sweet guy, he really was, but she wasn't ready for any sort of *romantic* relationship, not after... well, not after the outcome of loving an emotionally stunted boy who had a phone pole stuck up his ass.

Or so she *thought* . Her heart and head never really agreed on the same thing.

“What’s got you so pissed this time?”

Sakura lunged at him, taking him back by two steps as she buried her head between the junction of his neck, inhaling his scent to keep herself calm.

“Tsunade-sama?”

She grumbled something and his hand smoothed over back, simultaneously stepping back with her as she heard the door shut.

“Well, it comes with the apprentice package.”

“She,” Sakura detached from the hug, staring up at amused brown eyes with her unamused ones, “ screamed at me for a typo , a simple fucking typo, and it wasn't even my job! She’s the Hokage dammit! Why am I

always doing her job?!"

He snorted, "Mentors are all pain in the ass."

She stomped off to his kitchen with a huff, opening the fridge door with more force than necessary, and snagged the first thing in sight which happened to be a nearly empty jar of pickles.

She took a seat near the kitchen counter and he joined her, offering a pair of chopsticks.

"Sakura, file these by the end of the day! Sakura, memorize this book which I'm just going to spontaneously quiz you on! Sakura, stop nagging me! Sakura, review my pile of patients because I have a hangover—" she stabbed her chopsticks into the opened jar, angrily biting on the pickle, "She's my S hishou, and by god do I have an immense amount of respect for her, but— fuck!" she screamed, then swallowed it down before taking another bite of the sour delicacy.

He patted her back wordlessly, nodding to her plight.

She finished the remaining two pickles in the jar before shoving the empty container to the side. "How long till they put you back on the mission roster?"

He sighed heavily, head lolling to the side as his palm supported his face. "Not long enough."

"Yeah, as if the three weeks off isn't enough."

He rolled his eyes, "I'm equally overworked as you, Sakura."

She grinned, throwing an arm around his broad shoulders, "That we are, aren't we? Too bad I don't get to take three weeks off."

He smiled minutely, "You could always get half your lungs blown off."

"Joke about that and I'll puncture your lungs myself."

"Just do as he says!"

"That would be troublesome."

"Take your troublesome and shove it up your ass —"

His laugh echoed, "Don't worry, I'll try my best not to end up in your ER."

“ASUKA! ASUKA-CHAN? DO YOU HEAR ME?”

Her hand slipped to his waist and her hold tightened. “You better—”

“WHAT IS HAPPENING TO HER?”

“I don't know!” her father's voice made it into her ear, though it barely did over her splitting headache— *why did she have a headache?*

“Kayama—”

“I called, they're on their way.”

“Asuka, honey, you *need* to tell me what's going on!”

What escaped her was an ear-splitting scream.

She couldn't make heads or tails of what was going on, her head was a raging storm, pulling and pulling and pulling from a source she could not make sense of, it throbbed palpably, robbing her of her vision as a blur of yellows and whites and blacks was all she could comprehend before the pull *snapped* , her vision diminishing entirely.

*

Chapter End Notes

There hasn't been much romance to this fic but the ship in her flashback, (which I'm sure most of you have already figured who) is a pairing that strangely fits for me. And I was planning on introducing romance to the fic somewhere around high school, (or maybe middle school), but with how the latter half of this chapter turned out, and how unsatisfied I was with it, plans changed.

A big thanks to my lovely readers who leave equally uplifting comments and the silent readers who cheer for this story with their thoughts! Hope this was a satisfying read!

Heroes and bakers

Chapter Summary

Asuka and Shota have a heart-to-heart.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by: Grig9700

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

13th September, 3097

It was a normal day.

That normal morning he woke up at eight three, washed up, and ambled over to knock on Asuka's door, finding her leg hanging off the railing of her bed, He'd tug at her leg while she grumbled about five more minutes before she sat up straight and glared at him like a ruffled potoo bird with her shoulder length hair sticking out in all sorts of wild twists.

He'd gone off to prepare breakfast after that, cooking up miso soup, reheating the leftover fish from dinner, and making steaming fresh rice before Asuka had trudged over to the dining table, clad in her uniform that he pressed last night. She'd asked what he made for lunch that day like usual, and he gave her an answer which happened to be chicken fried rice with baby carrots on the side. She'd hum if it was to her liking, and scrunch her nose if it wasn't, either way, the lunch box always came empty.

It was normal when he walked her to the kindergarten afterward, Asuka humming a tune that Hizashi often sang while both of them strode along the mildly busy pavements. Her teacher greeted him with the same enthusiasm as she always did, and he'd crouch down and tell Asuka not to cause trouble, fully knowing those words fell on deaf ears. She'd kiss him on both cheeks, zealously yelling *'bye Papa!'* as she disappeared into the classroom.

He executed his normal routine after coming home, doing laundry, vacuuming, mopping, dusting, washing dishes after preparing lunch, and finally, hanging the clothes out in his yard. He also had a visitor that day, which was *also* normal because said visitor had been gracing his home for the past two months, and as annoying as Shota found it, he had more respect for his high school principal than to just tell him to fuck off.

“Are you still opposed, Shota-kun?”

And as usual, Shota would say: “Yes.”

Then the mouse would dilly-dally in his home and leave after approximately forty-four minutes after his visit. Shota would contemplate why Nedzu was so intent on pushing him to be a *teacher* of all things when he was struggling with a mere four-year-old who sometimes didn't even *seem* like a four-year-old.

Nedzu's reason was viable in some way for wanting his admission in the U.A. as a staff, underground studies were, more or less, *weaker* than their usually offered ones. Shota wouldn't go as far as to say they *sucked* , but they could use an improvement. But that didn't mean the evil genius had to recruit him, there were plenty of eligible underground heroes capable of providing adequate teaching other than *him* .

After a long contemplation and an empty jug of coffee, he'd always reach the same conclusion he conveyed to Nedzu, then he'd be off to collect his child who thankfully didn't cause any trouble that required a phone call to him. Asuka would tell him all the highlights of the day on the way home, which was blowing away everyone with her musical skills (*her trumpet skills were the most ear-grating thing next to Hizashi's 'Tmfuckingastounded' voice*), learning planets names (*he was sure she knew more than eight planets with all the unconventional books she surrounded herself with*), and approaches to stranger danger.

He didn't have to remind her to stack her uniform in the hamper because she always did, and they'd have lunch together while they watched whatever caught their attention on t.v, which had happened to be a reindeer documentary. She helped him tidy up, then he would bring over his laptop to the living room where she often completed her homework, *homework* which she never had trouble completing despite her average grades.

A comfortable silence would settle between them, him clicking away

the reports he had yet to submit, Asuka scribbling away at her books. And since his shift started at midnight that day, he didn't have to remind her to dress up for Night Care. Asuka finished her work earlier than he did, asking him permission to go to Izuku's house which was only two blocks away. She had beamed when he said yes and had stuffed all her books inside her yellow bag before throwing them on the sofa, and rushing to the front door.

She left at four-fifty six and returned when it was nearing six. He knew from the pink stain on her sleeve that she bought a snack along the way, but didn't say anything because that was normal. Perfectly normal. Kayama and Hizashi dropping by his house after a lengthy day at work was also normal. Then helping him make dinner was also normal. A quiet gathering where everyone did their own thing; Hizashi zealously tapping away at his phone, Kayama doodling on a paper along with Asuka who was neatly coloring in her coloring book, and himself browsing through teaching courses was normal. (*what he was doing wasn't*)

Then Asuka asked about what a sugar baby was and he pondered *where* or *how* she heard it before giving her a perfectly sensible answer to which Hizashi thought otherwise. It wasn't like Shota wanted to raise her oblivious to her surroundings; the importance of not following a random person because Japan's dwindling crime rates didn't mean every criminal activity was coming to halt, sexual assaults targeted at minors, the concept of consent, the line between becoming a bully and a friendly brawl, the prejudice subjected to the minorities, the latter topic being quite recently brushed every since Izuku came out as quirkless— they were all topics he broached over with her. She was four years old, a *child* still, but he'd rather let his daughter be aware of the imminent dangers than let her be oblivious to it.

He was a pro hero, a precarious career as much as it was worthwhile, and most people that accompanied him were involved in the same profession, whether he liked it or not, his daughter was bound to be in danger at some point in her life. And as much as Hizashi disapproved of his methods, Asuka didn't seem the least bit ruffled when he addressed those issues, nodding at him in understanding as if he just explained the meanings of words she pointed out in her books.

When Asuka mentioned that the lady who presented her with such *useful* information suggested that Asuka would be successful in such a profession if she weren't a child, he felt silent rage swelling in him. As dense as he was sometimes at parenting, even *he* knew not to say such careless things. How dare someone advocate that *his* child would ever

be poor enough to beg some rich fart for money? While he was seething inwardly, the light sound of a pencil hitting the floor echoed and his sensitive ears twitched, attention redirecting to his daughter.

Her eyes had been blank. She was staring downwards at her coloring book, but from his lazy slouch, the sparkling green eyes were void of their life, and something itched at his mind, aggressively and intently as he remembered the *same* expression.

Once when she was coaxing him to buy a burger (*he first thought she was sulking*), the other time when he was late to pick her up at the Night Care and she was staring at him, *but not at him* , and then Utano appeared in front of him demanding him to at least give a phone call before he came in late while he explained the nature of his emergency, by the time Utano was huffing, content with his explanation, Asuka was in his arms, a smile on her face, and eyes iridescent once more (*he made sure to not let her out of his sight for the rest of the day*).

And now, a third time. She was wearing the same, eerie expression that had no business to settle on a child's face, much less his daughter who had already been through enough.

That wasn't normal.

He tossed his phone and slammed a hand on the table, startling Hizashi and Kayama. But she remained unresponsive. Then to his unadulterated horror, proceeded to fall off the stool she was sitting on, saved from her head colliding when Kayama caught her midway.

“What the fuck was that?” Hizashi looked at him wide-eyed.

“Is she having a seizure?!” Hizashi questioned next, more frantic as the girl lay still in his hands, emerald eyes *still* cloudy. “But this ain’t what a seizure looks like— Asuka, Asuka-chan!— goddammit Shota! What’s wrong with her?!”

Wordlessly, he pushed the table aside and ambled over to his daughter’s limp body. She snapped out of these on her own. He shook her till it happened one time and the other time he didn't *see* because Utano was in the way— *think rationally, rationally, panicking won’t get him anywhere* — “Scream.” he said to the frazzled man.

“What?”

“Scream. Use your quirk, call her out.”

“Fine.” he agreed, inhaling deeply. “ASUKA! ASUKA-CHAN? DO YOU HEAR ME?”

A twitch.

“ASUKA-CHAN? ASUKA-CHAN?!—”

Her face scrunched and her eyes blinked rapidly, shifting in Kayama’s hold. Relief flooded him, albeit short-lived. Ivory skin was flushing rapidly, and even if she hadn’t said a word despite being back in the present, the pain on her face was evident.

“What is happening to her?”

He didn’t know. He didn’t fucking know. This didn’t happen the last few times— “I don’t know— Kayama—”

“I called, they’re on their way.”

Hizashi had asked her what was wrong, diminishing his quirk and using a soft, lulling voice. She opened her mouth and *screeched* . Squirming in Kayama’s hold as Asuka tugged her hair. Fear rose inside him, fear so *palpable* that he reached for her, and before he even had the chance to do something— *anything* , her scream cut off, eyes rolling back, laying limp in Kayama’s hand once more.

The next few minutes were a blur. Paramedics showed up, asking them what happened. Asuka was rushed inside an ambulance. The doctors checked her vitals, mumbling something stupid about *nothing* seeming to be wrong with her. Him arguing otherwise. Asuka being admitted. Tests upon tests, all of which came *normal*. His patrol was forgotten. Then Hizashi was nudging a water bottle against his face, Kayama was on the other chair, intently focusing on an unconscious Asuka, and they stayed at the hospital for hours, until it was 3:06 am and Asuka woke up.

*

Hizashi tried to remain calm in the majority of the situations he faced. When Kayama was riled enough to be snapping at people behind two-way mirrors, he made sure to placate the situation.

When Shota called about a baby being left on the doorstep, Hizashi tried to remain calm and logical despite his other half wanting to

scream. But when his heart jolted at Shota banging on the table out of nowhere while wearing a troubled face, *a face directed at his daughter* and Hizashi's niece in all but blood, he let his screaming side win.

And it did not help his rising panic that Shota demanded him to use his quirk on her while she lay in Kayama's arms like a lifeless doll. It also didn't help that Asuka started screaming like a banshee right after her face flushed the brightest red. Nothing made sense with her reports either, they were all *normal* when they weren't *supposed* to be.

So while he was dwelling on *nothing making sense* , he decided to go buy take-out because he was *starving* . He was sure no one else was going to have much of an appetite, but he was a stress eater and his stress was stacking up pretty high with all the unanswered questions doing its merry-go-round.

He ventured to the nearest Burger Shack and ordered six chicken burgers, one of them excluding mayo and cheese, another void of any onions, a peach milk for himself, a lemon cider for Kayama, a vanilla shake for Shota, and a strawberry shake for Asuka just in case she woke up. Finally, he got sides of onion rings, mozzarella sticks, and some chicken nuggets.

He exited the establishment with a heavy bag and even a hollower stomach. Trudging back to the hospital with no trouble since the pavements and roads were void of people, save for the few night owls. On his way to Asuka's room, Hizashi waved to the pale nurse situated at the front desk, receiving a short nod of acknowledgment on her part. He pushed the glass leading to the hall that accommodated the private rooms, ceasing his walk only when he came face to face with room no. 390

Hizashi didn't open the door zealously as he did during his monthly appearances in the pediatric wards, instead, he slid the door open steadily, doing his best to be as silent as he could with a rustling bag of food.

Then his silence shattered, or at least the shattering of silence was subconsciously *intended* because all he could scream with was his normal voice.

The result of his screaming had a resting Shota standing up abruptly, his stool toppling on the floor. Behind him Kayama was positively on the floor, her eyes reaching her forehead.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?" she hissed.

But he didn't need to answer, nor did Shota, the answer was perfectly visible, sitting up on her hospital bed, clad in hospital garbs, hair aviating like unkempt tendrils, eyes— clear eyes, eyes in the shade of bubbles reflecting light, offering the same shine and gleam as perfectly blended rainbow—

“You’re blue.”

Hizashi had no idea what that meant, but laughter bubbled up from him regardless.

There were no more words exchanged after that because a doctor waltzed in along with three nurses, politely ushering them out of the room.

*

“Her blackout must have been caused by the manifestation of her quirk. Optics nerves are incredibly close to the brain, and seeing that Asuka-chan is a fourth generation...” Quirk specialist Sanami yapped away at the usual of how *quirks got stronger with each generation*, and he had more important questions to ask like, why was Asuka soulless for minutes before receiving her quirk? Why was it that she stared off into empty spaces with such an unsettling look in her eyes? It was his fault, wasn't it? He should've visited a doctor the first time it happened, keeping eyes on her at all times just wasn't *enough* —

“Why doesn't she have red eyes?” Shota asked instead.

She unclasped her hands on the report she had reviewed, unruffled by his question. “What was her Okaa-san's quirk?”

He held back a scowl. “Invisibility. It extended to everything she touched when initiated.”

“Then there you have it.” she replied simply, “Invisibility. Tricks of light. Reflection. *Rainbow* . It comes from her maternal side. Children don't necessarily inherit their parents' quirks right to the last dot, Aizawa-san.”

“What about the blue she mentioned?” Shota retorted, more irked than he should've been at the prospect of his daughter inheriting

something from *that* woman. It wasn't like he would think any less of Asuka, it was more of the questions that would rise from her. Even now, he wondered why she didn't question anything about an absentee mother despite dreading the actual answer he would have to eventually give her.

“What blue?” Sanami questioned, quirkling an eyebrow.

The ‘*you’re blue*’ she directed at Hizashi right after erasing his quirk—*oh*. Blue. As in, sad. (Or blue as in something she withheld from the specialist) “Nevermind.” he shook his head.

Sanami nodded, “Any further inquiries you have, Aizawa-san?”

“Is it possible for a four-year-old to have dissociative episodes?”

The quirk specialist blinked at him. Then blinked some more.

“Depends, has your child gone through anything to advocate such symptoms? I’m no expert on the subject since my expertise lies elsewhere, but it could be symptoms of depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, or post-traumatic disorder. The bottom line is, it could be *anything*, it’s best to check with a psychiatrist.”

So all bad news then.

*

“Shota!” Kayama screamed as soon as he entered the room, waving a half-eaten burger around his face, wearing the most dumbfounded face. “Asuka-chan said she doesn't want to be a hero!”

“That’s not what I said!”

“I don't see what the big deal is,” Hizashi drawled, his cheek stuffed to the maximum, “just ‘cos Asuka-chan was raised amongst heroes, it doesn’t mean she *has* to be one.”

Shota blinked, “...where’s the problem with this?”

“The problem is—” Kayama started, only to rearrange her expression to a befuddled one— “Wait, there *isn't* a problem, what am I saying?”

Shota redirected the burger she was waving to her slightly opened

mouth, “Go home after you finish eating.” He only pushed harder when she tried to protest. Kayama never functioned well without sleep.

He took the empty stool near Asuka’s bed and Hizsahi shoved a burger and a vanilla shake into his chest from the other side of the bed. “Firefly here wants to be a baker.” Hizashi chirped, slurping his peach milk with a perfect grin.

No surprise there. She never once said she wanted to be a hero. “Uhuh,” Asuka nodded promptly, her green eyes twinkling with their usual fervor. “I’m going to open a bakery when I’m old enough.”

Kayama cackled, “Asuka-chan, you need *actual* food in a bakery for the business to keep running, with your self-control, I doubt there is going to be anything left to sell.”

“There’s going to be plenty left to sell!”

“Sure kid, whatever you say.”

Asuka huffed this time, looking away from the amused woman as she continued to scarf down her second burger. Moments later Kayama was tossing the empty can of lemon cider along with the burger wrapper into the bin, and then almost made him spill the vanilla shake while she hugged Asuka with her usual vehemence. “We’ll visit you tomorrow.”

“Huh, *we?! I’m not—*” Kayama’s hand managed to whack his head without detaching from the hug, kissing on both of her cheeks before reassuringly patting Shota on his back.

“She’s getting discharged tomorrow,” Kayama said, tugging at the blonde’s collar when Hizashi sat rooted to his seat.

“It’s okay, ‘zashi-oji, I’ll be fine. Papa will stay with me.”

Hizashi grumbled something he couldn’t decipher, but he stood up begrudgingly, swiping his coat from the sofa before dipping his head to kiss Asuka goodbye.

When they both left, Shota was trying to organize the questions he had for her without trying to sound like he was interrogating a villain.

“Papa, are you alright?” she asked, breaking the silence. She was

frowning with a stuffed mouth, asking if *he* was fine—

“I’m going to ask you some questions, alright? And this might make you slightly... *uncomfortable* , but I need honest answers.”

She stopped chewing, eyes briefly flashing with something unfathomable before settling in clear confusion. “Okay.”.

He cleared his throat, setting his barely eaten burger aside along with an untouched vanilla shake on the side table. “Before you received your quirk, was there anything specific you were thinking of? Or do you remember what you were thinking of?”

Shota studied her expression intently, a twitch, a scrunch, any tells that could assist him in concluding. But Asuka remained unperturbed, casually swallowing her food, and reaching for her strawberry shake, “I was thinking of the color pink.” she said, nearly dumbfounding him.

“Pink?” he repeated.

“Yeah, pink. The color is really pretty. And it reminds me of all good things.”

He clasped his hands on the bed, nearing his stool, “Good things like?”

The straw started to glitch like a broken record and she juttred the empty cup at him which he easily disposed of to the side.

“Like *love* ,” she said. Somehow, her face was glowing more brightly than normal, and this time, he caught a twinge of... melancholy? Longing? before that too, disappeared as soon as it came.

Well, that wasn't normal. At all. Unless she had a crush on someone, which he highly doubted that she did.

“Pink reminds me of papa, ‘zashi-oji, Kayama-oba, Izuku, Katsuki, Mitsuki-oba, Inko-oba, Utano-oba, Yumena-oba— *pink* is the color of love.” she grinned at him, “I think pink’s the reason why my quirk came too.”

That didn’t— *love* was the reason she looked dead while being alive? Then what about the other times? What about when she was two years old then? What about the rainy night he was late? What about then?

“Asuka,” he started slowly, hand patting her legs over the sheets, “I don't know whether you're aware of this, but the few seconds before you got your quirk, you were unresponsive.”

“...huh?”

“You were *unresponsive* . Breathing, alive, eyes opened and blinking, but unresponsive.”

She bit her lips, eyes leaving him and focusing on the linings of her nails. “But...” Her lips moved too fast for him to read, but the change in her mood was obvious. She was frustrated. “Okay.” she admitted, “But you can't tell this to anyone, alright? This is top secret.”

Those words managed to suffocate him just a little. “Alright.”

“Pinky promise?” she held out her pinky, mouth set firmly.

“Pinky promise.” he reciprocated, latching his pinky on hers.

14th September, 3097

Asuka always knew she was going to get caught at some point in her life. And the dissociative episodes she had weren't helping her case, but that was involuntary, and she would avoid them if she could. *But she couldn't* . And now her father was interrogating her about why she blanked out like a dead fish mere moments before she received her quirk— both of which weren't the *least* bit connected, just exceedingly ill-timed.

“I think I got my quirk when I was two.” Now she had to come up with convincing bullshit lies.

“What?”

“But not a sturdy version ‘cos it kind of buzzed out after a couple of seconds— Remember when I was with you and you refused to get me burgers after getting my blood taken and then I kind of zoned out?”

She didn't wait for him to nod, nor did she attempt to gauge his expression. Guilt was sprouting like mushrooms inside her. “I saw blue

people at that time. Many, many blue people and there were other colors too, but most of them were blue, and then the next thing I knew I couldn't see 'em anymore and you were staring at me lookin' worried."

This was not a *complete* lie. She couldn't see colorful people *then* unless she initiated to touch them, but now, with her weird doujutsu quirk that somehow managed to cancel another person's quirk, she could *definitely* see them.

"And pray tell, why didn't you think any of this was *important* enough to tell me?" he asked, looking more incredulous than anything.

She supposed that reaction was alright.

Asuka shrugged it off like a brat getting scolded for stealing cookies off the cooling rack, said brat being fully aware that they wouldn't get anything more severe than a light scolding. "Well, that's the thing, papa, you looked worried, and I was afraid you were going to fall sick again 'cos the last time I— *Utano-oba* told you something wild like that, you got a really bad fever and I wasn't allowed to be near you 'cos you said I'd get sick too, which isn't fair when *I* get sick, you're always looking after me."

She saw his face soften, "Asuka, I did *not* fall sick just because Utano-san told me about the time you ran off to a busy road to save a dog during the field trip to Dagobah beach— which is incredibly unsafe, *never* do that again— but this is different, you're telling me your quirk has been in effect ever since you're *two* and—" her father sighed, lifting his hands from her legs and covering his face with it.

She'd rather take him freaking out over a non-existent quirk when she was two than lose it over a daughter who had memories since she was in her *overly* affectionate mother's womb.

"Why'd you lie to the doctor about your quirk?" he asked finally. Was her sight getting blurry or did he seem relieved?

"I didn't *lie*," she said defiantly, and she didn't, withholding information wasn't *lying*. "Sanami-sensei just didn't ask enough questions. My quirk is Erasure, it erased 'zash-oji's quirk, didn't it?"

"As far as I'm concerned, erasure doesn't allow me to see *blue* or any other color for that matter."

"Come on, papa, we don't even have the same eye color when it's

activated, you can't expect *everything* to be the same." she quipped back, earning an irked expression from him.

"What exactly did you mean when you said Hizashi was blue?"

She leaned against the pillow behind her, "It means 'zash-oji was blue. He was blue *all* over his body until it came to his throat, and his throat was sort of double-coated in blue. Then when Sanami-sensei asked to activate my quirk I saw her in a dark brown." An excited smile crawled up on her face, "Do you know what her quirk was, papa? Mud manipulation! Sanami sensei said she could mold *and* form mud to her liking— she had an *elemental quirk* so her color was different!"

He inhaled deeply, "So let me get this straight. You've been activating your quirk partially since you were *two* , didn't think of telling me because *I* might get a fever, then had the longest dissociative episode yet before scaring the literal shit out of everyone and manifesting your quirk to its entirety. But even *then* , you *withheld* information about your quirk to the *quirk specialist* assigned to you, someone who allows you to gain a better understanding of your quirk, and... and *what* exactly is your reason for that?"

Now that he put it like that, it *did* seem like her scheme was a little too advanced for her age.

"I have an even better reason for that!" she clapped her hands, having more fun than she was supposed to. It wasn't like she was producing all lies here though, chakra was essentially what all these people referred to as *quirks*.

In simpler terms, the *core* which all kids had *spread* when their 'quirks' manifested, in her father's case, to his eyes, in Hizashi's case, his larynx, in Kayama's case, her skin lining, in Katsuki's case, his palm, and in Izuku's case, it lay dormant above the navel, non-spreading and still.

And in cases like hers who bounced back on life, she could mold it wherever she wanted to, gather it where she needed, and had more freedom with her core than the people of this world did. It was the difference between them and her; the capacity to mold chakra, and the ability to grow stronger without restraint.

"Have you read The Flight Heroes: Soar's biography?" he nodded, confusion blatant in his eyes, and she wasn't surprised.

“Then what about Akito: The sun hero?”

“Asuka, where are you getting at?”

“Don't you get it, papa? In Soar's biography, it's mentioned that he showed excellent bravery during a store robbery, then later he was recruited by the hero commission because his quirk was befitting a hero.”

She didn't like the chill in his eyes, but she continued yapping away at her bullshit anyways. “In Akito's biography, he's said to have saved *millions* of people by his healing quirk, and even if it isn't mentioned specifically *word to word*, it's clear as day that it wasn't his first choice. *‘I was a cowardly child, but cowards have their time to shine too. My time came when my quirk was established, and with that, I was offered a chance to help millions of people.’* Do you see the pattern here, papa?”

She knew what his first question would be, she knew what her answer would be too. “In Abner's book, he explains the corruption related to the government. And I'm sure that book's not *supposed* to be out on the market, but the lady who sold it to me said it'll open my eyes about the views of the world and it did!”

Maybe she took this a tad bit too far? Because her father wasn't supposed to know where she got her cheap supplies of books.

He sighed again. He sighed a lot today. “I don't know where to start,” he said, voice sounding tired enough to make her hold back a wince. Then gray eyes hurt which made her wince. “But I would *never* hand you off to the *government* , or to the *hero commission*, or any other place for that matter just because your quirk happens to be *convenient* enough to mold you into an exemplary hero. I'll never force you into anything you don't want to, let's get that clear, shall we?”

She nodded. It was already clear that he wouldn't force her into anything she didn't want to do. Her father loved her that much— she loved him too, and maybe hurting him like this wasn't necessarily the ultimate way to make him never question her dissociative episodes because she sure as hell wasn't telling any living soul about her lovely flashbacks correlating to her past life. “I know you won't sell me off like that, but they're much stronger than you. If they wanted to take me, they would. I can erase quirks *and* have a clear guess on what a person's quirk might be, I'd be *excellent* hero material to them.”

His face twisted to a resolution that reminded her of Naruto, “No one's going to take you *anywhere* , alright? *I'm* your legal guardian, they

can't do anything without my permission, much less force you into a career you don't want to do." he grasped her semi-oily hands and squeezed them, "You can tell me anything. You're *supposed* to be carefree enough to tell me anything. You're a *child*, Asuka, still a baby in my eyes, you aren't expected to worry and withhold your feelings by taking *mine* into account, and you're certainly not supposed to be scared of your own country pressuring you into something they *should not* and *cannot do*. Understood?"

She beamed, squeezing his hands in return, "Understood."

He reciprocated her smile with his, "Good."

"Can I have your vanilla shake if you're not drinking it?"

He laughed.

Asuka happily took the drink when it was offered, stirring it with the straw before slurping a good amount. "Since I'm confessing everything," From her mid-peripheral vision, she saw him go slightly rigid. "I want Papa to know I've been faking my grades too."

He relaxed instantaneously and his tone was much lighter too compared to before when he spoke. "Did your illegal books tell you something related to that?" No, this one was quite stupid and obvious.

"I have *legal* books." she replied first, settling the drink between her legs, "And *no* , if I get good grades, which I most certainly *could* , then I'd be fawned over like big-headed Benjiro."

"Big-head *who* ?"

"The class topper." she said, taking another sip, "He's a very smart kid, and the teacher loves inflating his ego— he kind of acts like Katsuki that way. If I have average grades, sensei doesn't have to give me extra help, nor do I have to be compared with Benjiro."

"I see." he said, reaching for the burger on the side, "That's a... smart way to go under the radar. Anything else you have to tell me? Anything I won't have to find out later that results in my hair turning gray?"

She cackled inwardly, there were so many. But she chose the most recent one.

“Well...I met a lady.”

“And?” he chewed a lot more slowly.

“And she told me she was papa’s okaa-san.”

His eyes turned cold and she slurped on her drink, feigning ignorance. In her defense, she didn't even know her grandmother was going to ambush her while she was displaying the correct way to do katas to two over-enthusiastic boys (apparently they weren't much curious to know where she learned it from, which was entirely good for her)

“What did she do? And... by kami, Asuka, why *don't you tell me these things?*”

Because he tended to stress over said things like a mother hen and later proves to ruin his already messed up sleep schedule to the extent that she'd have to conjure up a special chicken soup which knocked him out approximately thirty minutes after he digested it. But she couldn't tell him that now, could she?

“It slipped my mind.” she spewed the truth for the first time, “And she looked nothing like Papa so I didn't believe her. Stranger danger, you know?” Of course that had to be followed by a lie, not the part about her father and grandmother looking dissimilar though, they seriously were eons apart in terms of appearance. “Katsuki and Izuku were there with me when it happened, so she didn't try to take me anywhere or anything— *actually* , she didn't do much except speak, and said I looked nothing like you except for the hair.”

She peered at his conflicted gray eyes, “Then I said my facial features were still developing and she started laughing.”

“...laughing?” he said slowly.

“Yeah, and then she tried to pat my head so I slapped her hand away.”

“Good.”

Asuka grinned, and her happy mood stayed because her father no longer frowned. Though she knew she had to address *one more thing* before she stopped spilling her guts. This was the right mood, the right setting, she had told him of her partial non-existent quirk, her not-really-a-concern about the government and the hero commission, a flash of her intelligence, her encounter with her grandmother, and now she had to address this issue because she wanted him to know

she was *fine* without a mother, that he didn't have to tippy-toe around the topic just by the mention of a maternal figure because she honestly couldn't give a less flying fuck about that deranged woman, though she was certainly going to phrase it more gracefully, but before she could speak—

“Your Kaa-san...” her father stared at her with unnecessarily hesitant eyes, his face somehow accomplishing to age two more years. “Your eyes are different from mine because you inherited them from your Kaa-san.”

“Kaa-san?” Asuka feigned an innocent look. “I have a Kaa-san?” She was hoping to start the topic since it’d mean that her father would realize that deep down, she wasn't as weird and scheming as he made and found her out to be, but this was cool too.

“Everyone has a Kaa-san,” he said, keeping his burger aside once more.

“Then is mine dead?” Asuka questioned, trying to prevent herself from patting herself on the back, maybe she should ditch being a baker and pursue a career in acting. “Like Nanami-nee, is she dead?”

Her father winced, “No,” he straightened from his slouch as he tried to wear a less constipated face, but it still looked extremely constipated to her. “She's in prison.”

She blinked, anticipating a softer approach rather than a blunt ‘*She’s in prison*’

“Why?”

“She did something bad.”

“Yeah, but *why’d* she do something bad?”

Anger flashed in his eyes, “Some people don’t need a reason to do something bad.” His warm hands found hers again, regarding her with a much more neutral look than seconds before, “We can meet her if you want, but I wouldn't recommend it.”

She’d snort if she could. How could he just zoom to A and then plunge to Z within eye blinks? What part of suggesting a four-year-old meet her satanic mother was a good idea? If she were an innocent, curious child, maybe she’d get inquisitive and say yes to that idiotic suggestion, only to receive a mind-blowing backlash to her feelings

and self-esteem because she was sure that that woman wasn't going to be the least bit accommodating to the very person who was the reason she was incarcerated in the first place.

"I'd rather not then," she answered, perfectly sensibly. To hell with being portrayed as weird or scheming, she wasn't facing that foul gremlin, spending two months with her was enough bonding to last a lifetime. "If you're saying you don't recommend it, then I don't want to go."

The surprise was obvious on his face, "That's fine."

He was probably curious about her answer. And if she was maybe hit with a truth quirk, *maybe* she'd sing the answer like a canary, but she *wasn't*. So she waited till his curiosity hit rock bottom.

"...you're not the *least* bit curious about the woman who gave birth to you?" She had lots of retort to that question, mean ones like, '*Yeah, just like how you don't give a single fuck about yours*', or '*She could marry All Might and produce the most ill-fated babies and I still wouldn't bat an eye*'. Instead, she resorted to a teeth-rottenly sweet and innocent one she came up with.

"I mean, maybe a little, but it's not like I've known her at any point in my life," There was so much lie in that statement that she was inwardly reeling. "I don't miss her. But you just said she's in prison for doing something bad, and you *also* said you don't recommend visiting her, so I'm guessing she did something bad to *me* when I was really small?" she blinked at him, taking in the stiff face that melted enough to make his eyes appear more glassy than they've ever been.

Huh, weird.

"I don't want to meet her then. If she doesn't like me then I don't like her either. I have enough people who love me, and Papa," she squeezed his hands, earning a weird hum from him, "If you brought her up just 'cos Chisako's okaa-san was being too nosy yesterday, then you don't have to worry. I haven't ever felt sad, or less loved just 'cos Papa's the only parent in my life. And snobby people like Chisako's okaa-san won't know the struggles of single parents anyways, they're too fat-headed to think straight. I'm sure if Inko-oba heard something like that she'd set the woman straight real quick!"

Her father seemed strangely subdued despite her explanation.

Suddenly she smelled fabric softener and felt an exceeding warmth

spread to her.

“Are you crying?” she asked, genuinely concerned as the hand that held hers were surrounding her neck, his light beard tickling her skin, light snuffles echoing as she rounded her arms around his much wider back, only the tips of her finger touching each other.

"No," He tightened the hug, “I got chili in my eyes.”

She smiled against his shirt.

16th September, 3097

Asuka had made sense of what happened approximately two minutes into her quirk activating and erasing Hizashi's quirk. As much as she was *pissed* at the prospect of her byakugou seal being emptied $\frac{3}{4}$ of what she had previously collected, she couldn't do much about it rather than patiently gather it once more.

The limitations of this world were expected, she was an oddity working against the currents of this world, it already showed in how she couldn't maintain a mere bunshin without exhausting half her abundant reserves, or how she couldn't even decipher her chakra nature, and when she tried producing a measly E-grade water manipulation jutsu, she ended up with a blasted fever that had her missing two days of school.

“I can't *believe* how you're just going to waste your talents!”

Ninjutsu wasn't ever attempted after that. Genjutsus weren't spectacularly hard, but her knowledge in the area was weak even if casting it didn't take up a huge bout of her chakra, and it certainly didn't help that there were no books to assist her in the venture. She was proficient in taijutsu. Medic ninjutsu was right above taijutsu. And she often produced extremely *potent*, but illegal medications in her home multiple times after her father left for his midnight shifts.

6 pm shifts weren't possible because he always left her at the Night Care, which would end soon because she was turning five. Either way, she always found a way to replace his vitamins with her versions which worked excellently judging by the way he was noticeably more healthy looking. She hadn't gotten to concocting an upgraded version

of his eye drops, but that required specific ingredients. Ingredients that she didn't have yet.

“Out of all the fucking things you could be, you choose to be some stupid baker?! *Baker*?! Are you shitting me?!”

Her Fuinjutsu only extended to standard silencing seals and explosion tags. She lacked kenjutsu talents and hadn't had the opportunity to explore her prowess with a sword or any other kind of weapon.

But this was an adequately peaceful world with plenty of people to help other people, there was no need for her to sharpen her skills as if she was preparing to lunge into another war. The same applied to her medical skills, technology here was advanced enough to revive people from the brink of death without pouring out their life essence. She had thought through her career choice, she wanted an easy life, and an easy life was what she was going to run towards

“With that quirk, you could become invincible! Of course not more than *me* , but damn it Time bomb, why would you waste your talents on making food?!”

“I think aspiring to open your own business is very cool!”

“Shut up, nerd! Don't encourage her!”

Katsuki's rage was understandable. She never once tried to correct him when he declared they were all going to be heroes. But it wasn't like she actively agreed with him either.

“What's wrong with baking?” she shot back coolly, swinging her legs on the gently lulling swing. “I *love* sweets, so I'll grow up and make sweets and I'll sell them to everyone who likes it!”

“But you're— you're *strong*!” he blurted, the word *strong* sounding like expired milk, “Why won't you be a hero? Because of you Izuku's getting strong enough to land punches on me, and because of you, I'm... I'm getting *better* too.” At least his attitude was taking a turn for the good.

“Being a hero seems like a lot.” she answered honestly, plopping off the swing to reach for her bag stacked on the nearest bench, “Papa's an underground hero so he goes out during nighttime, beats up bad guys, and all, and on rare occasions, he's out during mornings too.” She unzipped the bag and got out a metal water bottle, taking a large sip.

“Writing reports, attending meetings, assisting in investigations, I’m sure they’re all very rewarding and fulfilling, but it seems like really exhausting work to me.”

Katsuki clicked his tongue, “So you’re lazy as shit is what you’re saying?!”

“Maybe.”

“It’s okay, Asuka-chan, I support you!” Izuku, ever the sunshine exclaimed. She engulfed him in a hug, and he didn’t fluster at the contact like he did many other times.

“This is why you’re my favorite.”

“What’d ya say?!”

“You’re my favorite too, Asuka-chan.”

“What? No! Izuku yer supposed to be my friend first!”

“Kacchan sure is childish, isn't he?”

“Totally is.”

“I’m gonna kill both of you!”

*

Chapter End Notes

Hope that was good read!

List of OC's

Utano- night care worker

Yumena- night care worker

Sanami- quirk specialist

Chisaki- a girl from her class

Benjiro- smart boi

Also, I made a blunder by calling Kayama and Utano, 'baa' on the previous chapters, it's supposed to 'oba' since 'obaa-san' is for grandmother. so basically I've made Asuka call Kayama and every

other older woman grandmother instead of aunt. I'll be fixing that!

On a more depressing note, I will not be able to update in the coming weeks since my college assignments won't let me. But to make up for that I'll give you guys two very hopefully fulfilling chapters one after the other without a long intermission. Thank you for listening to my short rant :)

My flower girl

Chapter Summary

Sports day. Cats. Wedding bells.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by: Grig9700

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

16th May, 3099

It was a busy day. Commotion buzzed from parents fussing over their children. Some were urging their pouting kids to wear sunscreen, others pulled at their clothes and made sure they looked presentable enough even though that was a useless venture for the coming events, the majority of them were clicking pictures at every angle they could, and Shota was redoing his daughter's braids because Asuka implored that her hair would get in the way of *winning* .

"I'm going to win." she said, snapping her wristbands, no doubt grinning even if he couldn't see her face, "So make sure you win too, alright?"

He tied the rubber band at the end of her braid, "It won't be fair if I participate."

"Nu-uh, that's not how this works. You're a parent, so you get to participate, it's fair and square, and there are no rules stating otherwise." she countered, attempting to turn around, but he held her in place, still not done with her hair.

"Why are you intent on winning this again?" he questioned, looping the braid into an immaculate bun, then snagged bobby pins from his pockets to secure it.

" *Because,* " she pressed, "If I'm not academically advanced, then I need to at least have several accomplishments in other areas."

"You do?"

"Of course I do!"

"Okay," he answered amusedly, done with her hair.

Then her homeroom teacher called all the students to assemble on the open ground to start the sports ceremony, and all the kids rushed out of the shaded tent, including his daughter who gave him an exceedingly smug smile while jogging along with the rest of her year mates.

It was ironic how she insisted on getting average grades, but when it came to sports she decided achieving first place in every race was a necessity.

The day hadn't even reached its climax when he started receiving stinky eyes from the fellow parents around him. It wasn't like he could help it either, was he supposed to coax his kid to go easy on the other kids while his kid was *also* the same age as their kids? Because that was quite frankly the most outrageous thing next to their kids whining about *Akuma Asuka* hoarding her gold— what did that even mean? But it was only the red team doing its whining, so he supposed he'd let them slide by calling his child a demon.

"Did you see me throwing the disc? I didn't even have to use chak— my full strength— and did you see me sprint fifty meters? My lungs were about to burst, but I still won—" he stuffed a piece of nugget in her mouth.

"Eat first."

She chewed it similarly to how she inhaled the bun in the bun-bun race.

"They're staring at you," Asuka said, swallowing her food, her eyes focusing behind him.

"Who?"

She leaned in, swiping a fry from the lunch box he prepared, "I wouldn't recommend Nami's kaasan 'cos she's apparently on her fourth marriage. Futaba's kaasan looks nice, but I saw her kick a puppy, and Etsuko's kaasan's okay, but Etsuko has a temper worse than Kayama-oba, so I wouldn't recommend that."

...this kid.

“Asuka,” he said, sighing deeply, “for the forty-seventh time, please stop suggesting partners for me.”

She grinned shitfully, “Oh come on papa, your daughter isn't so close-minded.”

“Then I'd prefer you be close-minded when it comes to situations like this.”

She patted his knees with a casual hum, then reached for the guava juice, “You'll come to appreciate me one day.”

For that, he stuffed another piece of nugget into her mouth.

In the following events, Asuka left him exceedingly proud and vaguely worried. In the sack race, she had stomped up enough dust and created alarming craters in her wake. During the three-legged race she did with her classmate—the one whose mother kicked a puppy—she had dragged the other girl through the field. Then her performance in the obstacle race left him wondering if his daughter had some kind of training—which was a viable possibility since he knew the Trio (Izuku, Katsuki, and Asuka) got up to all sorts of shenanigans.

He wasn't inherently surprised when the blue team won the tug-of-war. And the highlight of it all was the costume race where she chose the ninja outfit and proceeded to sprint in a manner their ancestors would be proud of.

By the end of the kids' events, the blue team was the apparent winner, and it was no surprise to anyone that Asuka was medaled as the MVP.

With the rays of the setting sun contrasting one half of her jovial face, eyes twinkling like precious emerald, and dirt staining her clothes and skin, he snapped the perfect shot of her showing off the gold medal hanging around her neck; a shot that Kayama and Hizashi would've been proud of.

Then later when they initiated the Father's race, he protested against going because it wasn't fair competition, but Asuka had no qualms on whether it was fair or not— *‘ Life's not fair, papa, and everyone you're participating with is probably adult enough to understand that ’*— is what she had said.

So here he was, sprinting two hundred meters while the mothers from

the blue team were screaming their cheers. Tug of war was bearable since the activity required teamwork, and he wouldn't be at the center of attention. Then the woman who had inherently kicked a puppy asked for his number after he came back to the shaded camp, and he could vaguely hear Asuka choking in the background.

31st May, 3099

“Okay, I’ve been meaning to ask you this, but *what* are we doing here?”

Kayama hummed in answer, doing a little twirl on the stand she was occupying, making the flowy dress flare like the most fairytale-like thing ever.

Asuka blinked, “Is this a new hobby? I mean we’ve been here for the past two hours and you’ve tried over a million dresses— just what are you trying to do?” she repeated, her agitation hitting zero as her aunt fluttered about in her seventh dress of the evening with the same dazed smile on her face.

“Is it not obvious, little girl?” The very diligent employee who had been fitting Kayama into all sorts of blinding dresses spoke. “You oba-san is getting *married* , why else would she try on wedding dresses?”

Her eyebrows furrowed, “What do you mean she’s getting— don’t you need a *partner* to marry? Kayama-oba doesn't have that.”

At her statement, laughter flourished inside the boutique along with coos of how *innocent and adorable* she was.

She was, more or less, dumbfounded.

When Asuka accompanied Kayama to a girl’s day out, she was expecting shopping, mani’s and pedi’s, pigging out at the nearest hotdog cart, but not *this* .

“Asuka-chan.” Kayama finally spoke, stepping off the stand with the help of an employee. “To think my little flower girl wouldn't know my groom-to-be.”

What the fuc — “Huh?”

“Your Hizashi-oji, hun.” Kayama said, “Who else would I marry other than him?”

Asuka didn't know it was even possible to fall while sitting, but she managed to do just that.

*

“PAPA! PAPA! PAPA!—”

Shota nearly dropped the tray of cookies he was holding due to the sheer urgency in her voice, but he discarded it on the stovetop instead, rushing his legs to scramble out of the kitchen only to find his kid zooming around the living room to reach right where he was. “—Kayama-oba— *crazy*— wedding— marrying Hizashi-oji— Can you believe her?!”

There was a moment of silence after that outburst. Asuka was panting with a crazed look on her face, and Shota gazed towards the opened door where Kayama was lingering, her palm covering her mouth while her shoulder shook like the mixer he used to grind Asuka's food with.

“What's going on?” Hizashi broke the silence as he appeared behind Kayama with a jolly face.

Shota pursed his lips to fend off an oncoming laugh.

His know-it-all kid, the most observant six-year-old, the one who kept secrets from him because she thought he might not be able to stop the government from taking her into the hero commission because she had the most convenient quirk, the one who masked her grades to lose attention— *this kid* was oblivious to Kayama and Hizashi's relationship?

“Asuka-chan won't believe that we're getting married,” Kayama answered him.

“Of course, I won't believe you're getting married!” Asuka hollered, both hands taking their spot on her hips as she got into the stance Shota liked to call *‘the no-nonsense stance’*, “There's *no way* I wouldn't know about this!”

To Shota's heightening hilarity and Asuka's rise in somewhat-reasonable agitation, Hizashi plopped his head on Kayama's shoulder and wrapped his arms around her waist, "But we *are* getting married. We told you last night, Kayama announced it after dinner and we even showed you our rings."

"....that happened last night?" Asuka looked up.

Shota patted her head with his mitten, "It did." Though she might've been too preoccupied to make sense of the news while reading through the latest news on how All Might saved a whole ward of people with scrunched eyebrows and pursed lips. "You even congratulated them while Hizashi whined about how unexcited you sounded."

"That's right, you practically shrugged it off." Hizashi agreed.

"And you even agreed to be the flower girl!" Kayama added.

He watched her as she just blinked, her no-nonsense stance still firm, "So you've been dating this whole time?"

"Ever since you were two years old, kiddo," Hizashi answered, both of them trudging inside the house as they shut the door behind them.

"...ever since... I was... *two*... "

Then, she proceeded to chortle most unnaturally and her hand slipped from her hips, short legs lugging towards the hallway leading to her room. "Two years... *wow* ...two years...I must be going senile... yeah, definitely..."

And she was gone, replacing the living room with silence once more. Though that didn't even last two seconds. "Is she going to be alright?"

"She's going to be fine."

20th June, 3099

It was magical how infrastructure in this world was so advanced and unorthodox. Buildings looked more than just common apartment complexes with boring paint. Security wasn't just keys and seals, it used fingerprints and other spectacular recognitions that Konaha

hadn't even thought to use. Roads contained paints and rules, *public transportation* was an actual thing, vehicles were like flash steps, and aquariums, in general, were the most fascinating spectacle.

Konoha was traditional and unconventional in its own right, but Japan— *no* , the earth itself was so vast and brilliant that she would need several lives over to explore the whole entirety of it.

Though right now she was more than content with seeing a giddy dolphin messing with people by its spontaneous version of peek-a-boo.

"Come along." a familiar voice drifted into her ears, tugging her hand as they passed the wide array of fishes.

She tumbled along with him in enthusiastic steps, her other hand keeping a firm grip on the strap of her green bag, "What's your favorite fish, papa?"

"I don't have one." He said, shielding her from the touring crowd by picking her up. Asuka's hand latched around his neck on impulse, somewhat embarrassed that he had to adjust her several times.

"Am I heavy?" she grumbled, a neon writing entering her vision.

"Yes."

"Papa!"

"It feels like I'm carrying a baby whale."

She gritted her teeth, "Baby whales weigh 2000-4000 kilos, that isn't scientifically possible!"

"I'm a hero, I can do anything."

"A hero with an *optic-based* quirk."

He didn't put her down even when they joined the queue for lunch, "No one likes a smartass."

"No one likes a liar either!"

After they received the tray of food from the Subway, both of them found a seat in the noisy cafeteria. Her father unwrapped her beef sub, and she put straws in both their drinks before both of them started eating.

He nagged at her for picking the tomatoes in her sandwich from time to time, then told her to stop lathering her fries with ketchup, right after that she proceeded to spill her orange soda on her yellow shirt, and he shook his head at her.

She had been prone to clumsiness ever since her rebirth. This was just one of the few accidents she had since the day began, other than the bumping into the glass door earlier today, and nearly slipping off the stairs at the bus.

Asuka slipped off her seat and grabbed her bag which hung on the arm of the chair, "I'm going to wash this off."

Shota stood up to accompany her, only to be halted by her palm.

"I'm six, not *three* ," she pressed, "and the bathroom's right over there, so you'll see me if I happened to be a target of kidnapping."

He tugged her ear in retaliation, "Don't fool around."

Asuka rolled her eyes before turning to leave.

When she returned with a wet, stainless shirt, a huge parcel sat on her chair, and her father gazed at her with confusion. She almost kicked the chair nearest to her.

That parcel was supposed to be delivered after they were done eating!

"Well, happy Father's Day!" she said instead, picking the hefty parcel from her chair and dumping it on his lap.

And like every loving, caring, smitten father, he said: "Where did you get the money to buy this?"

"That's the first thing you ask?! Your daughter gives you a gift for *Father's Day* and you raise questions on how I got your present. I'm not a criminal, you know."

"You do plenty of things to validate my suspicion."

"Like what?!"

"Like buying shady books." he returned effortlessly.

At that, she humbled, "It's not shady if it's *cheap* ."

"Like teaching Katsuki and Izuku how to fight without having any

formal training.”

“I’m a quick visual learner!”

“Like cheating the system.”

“Okay, so I’m *smart* , shouldn't you be proud to have such a capable child?”

“Like arguing.”

“Smart kids like me don’t take kindly to injustice, even if it comes from family— and arguing isn't even a valid point! Can you just open the gift? I poured half my savings into it!”

He shot her a suspicious look, his hand subconsciously fiddling with the yellow bow attached to the top of the boulder-sized parcel, “Asuka, you spend all the money I give you on candy and books, pray to tell how you have savings?”

Asuka wanted to cry, why won’t he just open the parcel and accept her goodwill?!

“I’m kidding.” her father said, pulling her arm as he urged her to take a seat. Asuka took a seat and snagged her drink from the table.

“It’s also a congratulatory gift,” she informed, sipping on her beverage. “Kayama-oba and Hizashi-oji said you’re finally going to join U.A.”

Soon after her father started unwrapping her gift, she had the honor to see an exponentially confused look on his face as he held up the yellow polyester bag.

“Do you like it? I found it online. There was orange and red too, but I liked the yellow better. It’s more bright and noticeable so others won’t kick you even if they see you sleeping in it.” she explained enthusiastically.

“...this... you bought me a sleeping bag?”

“Yeah!” she agreed, “I’ve noticed you sleep well during the day. It’s like the time we went to Kyshu and I slept soundly because Naruto was with me, so I figured if Papa can’t carry around a stuffed toy then a sleeping bag wouldn't be so bad— carrying a piece of home will help you sleep more peacefully!”

“I’m not going to sleep on my job,” he said, then he tousled her nicely made hair and she knew he was pleased with the gift.

Later when they exited the premises and strolled the semi-congested streets, Asuka tugged him into a pet store.

She fell in love with a white Abyssinian with baby-blue eyes and named it Oni.

Her father picked a brown Sepia with grey eyes and named it Fergus.

Then during dinner, Hizashi told her she was definitely her father’s daughter.

27th April, 3100

Shota was slightly surprised to know that most of his old teachers weren’t among the staff members.

Recovery Girl, Power Loader, Snipe, and Ectoplasm, were the only familiar faces from when he was a student. Though it seemed as if half his year mates were deployed here because Kan was whining about how Shota beat him *again* . Not that Shota made any sense of what the man said.

Kayama and Hizashi had joined a year before he did, and Hound Dog, a senior of his, was working as a guidance counselor of all things. Two of his juniors, Cementoss and Thirteen were employed as well.

Even when facing the wide crowd of students, he still pondered as to whether or not he could do a good job. Especially since Nedzu was crazy enough to assign him to class 1A, he didn't know what the mouse was thinking when he said Shota could do whatever he wanted as long as he didn't cross the line.

And he didn't even get a manual on where the line was.

But then again, he was a father to an eccentric kid, so mentoring these baby-faced heroes-to-be shouldn't be that hard, right?

His thoughts took a complete detour when he met his class.

“Sensei, are you even a hero?”

“ *You’re* our homeroom teacher?”

“This is the U.A. standard?”

“My brother had *Kore* : The Flower hero as his homeroom teacher, but why is it that we get a Hobo as a teacher?”

In short, the majority of his kids were snotty brats who didn't know the first thing about being a hero.

Some idiot even asked what an underground hero was when he revealed his title. Another brat said class 1B was lucky to have Vlad King. Then right after he had informed them of what an underground hero was, a yellow-haired kid who vaguely resembled a frog asked him why he wasn't included in the Hero Board.

At that point, he missed Asuka who at least asked him sensible questions. These fifteen-year-olds were supposed to be the next batch of promising heroes? Shota wished he could whack them over the head, but that went against *his* Manual of Lines.

So he made do with giving them hell instead.

1st November, 3100

“Oh. My. God, is that Fat Gum? And he’s talking to Tiger, am I dreaming? The whole of Pussy Cats is here!— Asuka-chan look, isn't that Edgeshot, and Vlad King! Where is my notebook?!”

Asuka blinked at Izuku’s excitement.

Of course, Kayama and Hizashi's wedding would be a gathering for Heroes. Both of them were proud extroverts with Hizashi in particular having the extraordinary talent of befriending walls.

“Tch, it isn't like All Might is here, what are you getting so worked up for?” Katsuki, ever the amiable gremlin grunted.

“Hey, All Might’s cool too, but that doesn't mean they’re any worse off,” Izuku frowned, “Thirteen is a rising rescue hero, do you know how many people she saves daily? In the latest incident in Akashi Ward, she rescued *over a hundred* people with her quirk! The Pussy Cats saved numerous people from mudslides, and they even frequent

orphanages and pediatric wards. And didn't you see that incident in the mall where Fat Gum—”

“Izuku, I implore you, please shut up.” Katsuki cut in.

Asuka snorted.

Pertaining to Katsuki's request, Izuku didn't stop his rambling, prattling a tale about every hero within his line of sight as Katsuki grew more and more frustrated. Now, hero stories were more than welcome within their group, and oftentimes Izuku was the one providing them with such narratives, but he tended to repeat them a lot and that was a type of torture both she and Katsuki despised.

Naturally, Asuka wasn't going to take the punishment along with Katsuki, so ignoring the other boy's pleas, she slipped off her seat and ambled out the hallway and into the connecting room leading to Kayama's dressing room.

Kayama was always beautiful to her, but today with her angular face painted with light makeup, baby blue eyes shining similar to Naruto's, and her dark mane of purple hair twisted into a large bun adorned with pearls and gems, dressed in lilac wedding garments that made her look like a fairy, she looked *stunning* .

“Ah, my flower girl,” Kayama cooed, “How do I look?” she twirled on the stand, posing with her white and purple bouquet.

“Like a knockout as always.” Asuka indulged her.

Kayama chuckled as she lifted her dress and got off the stand. “You look adorable too,” she said, patting her cheeks and bringing her into a side hug.

Soon after Tomoko (Ragdoll), Kayama's chief bridesmaid entered the room and informed her that the ceremony was about to commence and ushered the both of them out of the room. Asuka was handed a basket filled with colorful petals while Tomoko crouched down and fixed the nonexistent creases on her dress.

“Don't be nervous, alright? Just do as we practiced.” the gold-eyed woman instructed, tucking her hair behind her ears before adjusting the bobby pins in her hair.

Which one of them was nervous again?

She refrained from blurting it out, only providing words of reassurance. "Don't worry Tomo-oba, we'll do great!"

Tomoko offered a gentle smile in answer.

"Alright, everyone's taken their seats, you all should know the order, right?" Tomoko hollered, "Asuka-chan and Izuku-kun will lay the flower path after the music starts, and Katsuki-kun will go right after. After we take our places, Kayama will step out with Jiro-oji-san." she finished in one breath, addressing everyone behind her with a shaky smile.

Seriously, which one of them was getting married again?

"Tomo," Kayama snorted, "will you loosen up? Nothing is going to go wrong."

"Right." the other replied succinctly, smoothing over Kayama's gown like a mother bear.

Her agitation made Asuka wonder just how frantic Tomoko was at her wedding.

"Take your places then!"

No sooner had she said that, violins stretched with their tunes and the piano intertwined with the chorus, Tomoko signaled for the main door to be opened, both her and Izuku stepping out to the plum carpet leading to the aisle.

She wasn't going to deny that the eyes on her were the most comforting. Even Izuku seemed to be mumbling something under his breath as he threw a fistful of flowers to the path, his hold on the basket much tighter than hers. Katsuki had said he didn't mind being either, but being the ring bearer meant they had to have steady feet, and Izuku didn't fit the criteria very well. He was already too muddle-headed from being surrounded by too many celebrities.

Asuka smiled along the path, her focus diverted to Hizashi in the middle who was clad in a white suit. His black vest accentuated the lilac tie. His hair was unsurprisingly styled to a low ponytail, and she did not doubt that Tomoko would've beaten him with a stick if he tried going along with his usual cockatoo mess. Hizashi looked neat, but her father who was beside him looked neater because he had the courtesy to shave his face and tie his hair into a low ponytail. But then again, it was both his best friend's wedding, if he hadn't cleaned up,

Asuka would've picked up a stick herself.

When they reached their stop, Izuku took his spot in front of her father, and she joined where it was assumed to be the spot in front of Tomoko.

"Hizashi-oji," she whispered to him.

His red eyes focused on her. "Yes, Firefly?"

"Your hair looks nice today."

Someone amongst the groomsmen snorted and her father shot her a Look.

Asuka suppressed a smile, focusing on Katsuki. The boy seemed nonchalant at first glance, but the red in his ears contradicted. Tomoko and the rest of the bride's maids filtered out in pretty violet dresses, then finally, the door opened for the bride. And as the star of the day sauntered on the plum, petal-scattered carpet, her uncle was starstruck.

Love was so nice.

Clouds drifted along the stark blue sky, the sun warmed their feet, leaves of a mulberry shielding them. Shikamaru's scent of wood and smoke set her at such ease that she felt drowsy.

"You know what Ino said to me the other day?" The wind blew at them, her position only allowing her to hear the soft howl as the other bore the brunt of it.

"Something about having to go to the saloon because she had split ends?" Shikamaru answered, his half-lidded eyes staring up at the leaves.

Sakura smiled, "That too." she agreed, "But she asked if I was together with you simply because you reminded me of Sasuke."

The leaves above rustled with another gust of wind. "What part of me resembles him?"

Sakura burst into laughter.

"I, Yamada Hizashi, take you, Nemuri Kayama, to be my lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death does us part."

Once she sobered, he spoke again, "What was your answer?"

"My answer?" she hummed, gazing at him from the corner of her eyes.

"I, Nemuri Kayama, take you, Yamada Hizashi, to be my lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death does us part."

Chestnut met with Emerald, "It was a no . Sasuke's still a teammate we have to rescue, and my feelings for him are platonic. There's no way I'd use you like that, Shika, and I doubt you'd let anyone treat you like a replacement either."

Triumph glimmered in his eyes before his head dipped between the junction of her neck and shoulder, "Damn right I wouldn't."

Thunderous claps filled the venue along with whistles and cheers, but Hizashi and Kayama seemed to be immersed in their little bubble as both of them stared at each other with radiant smiles adorning their faces.

His unruly pineapple hair tickled the side of her face, "I love you, you know that, right?" Sakura said, caressing his cheek and tucking the stray brown hair behind his ears.

"Of course." he murmured against her skin, "And when the troublesome war is over, we'll get married."

Warmth bloomed in her chest, "Yes we will."

No they won't.

As Asuka viewed the couple stepping down the stairs and into the flurry of guests howling congratulations, her mind was plagued with the broken promises they made.

Shikamaru and Sakura never got their happily ever after.

And they'd *never* get their happily ever after.

"Asuka?"

She blinked, "Yes papa?"

He lifted her from the ground and tucked her to his side, "Don't worry, just because they're married, doesn't mean they'll turn to

strangers.”

Asuka smiled, swallowing the bittersweet feelings along with her memories of Shikamaru. Right, he was *gone*, and she wasn't Sakura anymore. “I know.” she played along, “But I’m more worried about you, won’t you be too lonely once they settle in their homes and start a family of their own? This is why I told you to find a nice lady from school.”

“I’ll toss you into the pond if you keep talking nonsense.”

Asuka cackled.

*

“Hey, I’ve been meaning to ask this, but who’s the kid near Aizawa?” Vlad King asked, gesturing his head in the direction where the audience witnessed Eraserhead wiping the aforementioned kid’s mouth with a tissue.

“Isn’t that the flower girl?” Fat Gum pitched in, munching on his fried chicken leg.

“That’s his daughter.” Edgeshot dropped, silencing the whole table.

“Senpai has a *daughter* ?” Thirteen broke the silence, “Since when?”

“What?!” Vlad King thundered, banging the table.

Tiger next to him raised an eyebrow, “He’s the one who has a daughter, why the hell are you so riled?”

Mandalay snorted, “Kan has always regarded Shota-kun as a rival.”

Pixie-bob squealed out a question, “When was this?! We aren’t as tight-knit as he is with Kayama-chan and Hizashi-kun, but we’re still his friends! How could he hide the news about getting married and having a child? This is outrageous!”

“Aizawa senpai has always been a lowkey person.” Manual chimed in.

“Why’re you all so interested in his private life again?” Gang Orca queried, tossing sauce-lathered fries into his mouth.

Rock Lock coughed, "That's right, we shouldn't be too nosy."

"You're obviously dying to know the gossip, senpai!" Pixie-bob refuted, pointing her fork at the red face hero.

"Who'd he marry?" Fat Gum asked, leaning closer to Edgeshot.

At that question, Edgeshot seemed to bury his head into his scarf.

"What are *you* getting all shy for?" Ingenium prodded this time.

"Come on, tell us!" Mandalay urged.

Edgeshot seemed reluctant, but he still spoke, "...well, it's a messy situation, so don't spread it around, okay?"

The majority of the heroes nodded in enthusiasm, encouraging him to go on while a minority could give less of a flying buzz— that *was* until Edgeshot's next word reached their ears.

"Nemuri's the mother."

Those simple words managed to boggle many of them to the core.

"What the hell?"

"It's a soap opera."

"Kayama-chan's the mother, but she married Hizashi-kun while she has a kid with Shota-kun? Now that's what I'd call *Wild*."

"And Yamada's okay with this?!"

"The real question is, *is he even aware of it?*"

"They're together *all* the time, why wouldn't he know?"

"Yamada's dense like that."

"Are you stupid? That kid's a carbon copy of Aizawa, even Yamada can't be *that* dense."

"Hmm, really? I don't see it. The only thing similar about them is the hair."

"Why the fuck do you look so giddy?"

"What? It's my face, I'll look however the hell I want!"

“I’ll say this again, don’t spread it around.”

“Fine, fine, we get it Kamihara, no one here’s a snitch.”

“Kan’s a big fat snitch.”

“Shut your trap, you damn four-eyes!”

And while the discussion went on, Tomoko returned to her seat with her plate filled with dessert. “What’re they arguing about?”

Egdeshot felt hot behind his neck, “I may have told them about Asuka-chan being Kayama’s kid.”

Tomoko choked on a cherry.

Five minutes later she banged on the table to silence them. “What nonsense are you all spouting? Kayama-chan is a *mother figure* to Asuka-chan, and they’re not biologically related *at all!* Shinya-kun had a slight misunderstanding because of an incident that happened several years back.” She directed her troubled gaze at her husband, “Seriously Shinya-kun, I didn’t take you one to gossip. What would you have done if I wasn’t here?”

Edgeshot blushed in response.

“Then Tomo-chan,” Pixie-bob pitched in, her eyes expectant, “who’s the mystery woman who won our grouchy Shota-kun’s heart?”

At that, Tomoko shrugged, “Who knows? All I know is that it isn’t Kayama-chan.” No sooner had she said that, she went onto sit, but was interrupted when her gown got tugged, forcing her attention to familiar green eyes that almost made her scream. *Did this kid hear all that?!*

“Kayama-oba said she needs your help.” The seven-year-old spoke, silencing the table filled with heroes. “She said something about the reception dress having the wrong design or something.”

Tomoko didn’t waste any time escaping the scene. “Then I’ll be running down there!”

Edgeshot gulped, “You look very pretty today Asuka-cha—”

“I heard you’re all *very* curious about who Papa married.” Asuka cut in, a smile playing on her face as if she had stated her favorite ice cream flavor. “Don’t worry, I’ll answer the question; Papa isn’t

married to anyone!" she chirped, providing notable discomfort amongst the pro heroes.

"I mean I *tried* to get him together with my classmates' parents, but he said he wasn't interested."

Gang Orca snorted.

The others had varying reactions; admiring the decoration on the table, playing with their food, looking everywhere but the small, babbling pipsqueak, Shota who was walking to their table—

"As for my Kaa-san." she drawled, bouncing on her heels as her eyes shined like jewels, "She's in prison."

... *what the fuck?*

"Asuka, they're calling you over for pictures....what's going on here?" Shota's eyes narrowed, sensing the awkward atmosphere.

No one answered.

"Papa, your friends seemed very curious as to who you married to have an *adorable* daughter like me!" she provided, beaming like the sun in high noon.

He glanced over the table of gossipmongers, all of whom were avoiding his eyes.

"—and then I told them that Kaa-san was in prison."

Shota felt an incoming headache.

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Chapter End Notes

HELLO MY LOVELY READERS!

First of all, thank you so much for 700+ kudos and 9000+ hits, like I came back after a month or so and ya'll have pushed this fic

to that extent? You guys are AWESOME! And like I've promised in the previous chapter, chapter eight will be published pretty soon. There won't be a two week interval!

Also, [This](#) is a lovely fan art I received from ryuroars, I couldn't for the life of me figure out how the image thing in ao3 worked so I've shared my tumblr with you. (I don't know how tumblr works either, I literally made an account to view writing tips and memes, but you guys can communicate with me through the app if you want!)

Over the month, I've received a handful of messages asking me not to drop the fic, and for weeks after I finished with my final exams, I really thought I was going to drop it since I had zero energy to write:(But then after a considerable amount of procrastinating I finally managed to write this chapter, and I really hope you guys enjoyed it!

Thank you all once again for the support and love you've shown for MDERN. I didn't think this little fic was going to progress into anything. I hope that those who do read this will read it till the end♡

List of OC's

Nami- classmate

Futaba- classmate

Etsuko- classmate

Jiro-oji-san— Kayama's dad

Stay put

Chapter Summary

School. Grandmother. Explosions. DEath?

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by: Grig9700

ALSO, scene under 7th December is inspired by DannyDoge and TrueShance!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

7th December, 3100

Ami liked Eraserhead sensei.

He wasn't necessarily a *nice* teacher, nor was a terrible one.

He was an *extremely* sadistic one, that she was sure of, but she liked to believe it was for their own growth.

Sensei had been ridiculed the first day he introduced himself. With his gaunt face and loose hair, his laid back composure and his dull style of clothing, even Ami had to admit that she had initially judged him. But then she had reminded herself that this was *U.A* , this school was exceptional in every aspect, they weren't going to shove an incapable person to nurture the future generation of heroes; Ami refused to believe so.

And when her classmates threw unneededly harsh remarks at him for being a no-name hero while also being terribly ignorant of the fact that underground heroes were low profile for a *good damn reason* , she wondered what kind of idiots she was stuck with for her highschool year.

But sensei straightened them pretty soon.

She was also included in the straightening, everyone was; running through minefields, avoiding electrocuted barbed wires, crawling through mud with worms, laps in the huge field for anyone that raised a complaint, threat of expulsion for anyone that refused to participate without a solid reason— he was devil through and through.

Whenever he wasn't terrorising them on the fields, his actual lessons were informative and easy to stick with, he taught them that their path wasn't going to be roses and cherries, that being a hero wasn't *fun* in any sensible context. At least it wasn't for him, he expressed.

In addition to the lesson he taught from the curriculum, he also managed to slither in assignments and research work outside of the curriculum.

It'll help you in the long run , he voiced, grinning maniacally as he slipped into his neon sleeping bag.

Nevertheless, Eraserhead sensei was a good teacher in terms of what good teachers extended to, and that was enough for them.

*

“Who’re you?”

“Huh? What’s a pipsqueak like you doing here?”

“Maybe it’s lost?”

“ *She* , you idiot.”

“All children are disgusting.”

“So are your eating habits, but you don’t see us complaining about it.”

“You guys always complain about it!”

“That’s beside the point, what’s *she* doing here and how’d she get past security?”

Asuka only blinked at the uninformed individuals.

To think she'd be *anywhere* near her father's workplace when he was so adamant to keep her out of there. But what choice did he have? The school was closed, Kayama and Hizashi weren't available because they had patrols to attend to, Inko and Mitsuki were both working moms, and apparently, Masaru had taken the liberty to take Izuku and Katsuki to a fan meet, and that happened *way* before the gas leakage at their home so she couldn't tag along with them. With no trusty adults to look after her, her father begrudgingly told her to dress up before taking her to his workplace because evidently, his '*Students were a bunch of morons who needed extra classes*'

"Is she mute?"

"Maybe she just doesn't like your face."

He had told her to wait in class while he grabbed something from the staffroom, and in her opinion, the staffroom was a much more viable option to stay in rather than a class that was bound to be filled with his '*Moronic students*', but then she remembered the colleagues he worked with.

"Will you idiots take your seats? Sensei will be here soon. Stop bothering the child, he'll deal with her."

Asuka's eyes glinted, "Hey Onii-san, what's your sensei like?" she asked the nearest student. She duly noted that it was the one who called her disgusting, so either that indicated he was extremely straightforward or just a major dick.

"Oh, it *speaks* ."

A major dick it was.

"You know, no matter how I look at it, I don't know how your ignorant bum got yourself into the hero course. Just *how* are you going to accomplish being a hero if you're so rude to people? The public's going to *hate* you."

"I'm not going to be a hero to pay lip service, so keep your shitty opinion to yourself, Nakamura!"

Wow, this one was like a perfect example of Katsuki if he was left untamed.

Nakamura seemed perfectly unfazed as she directed a fond smile toward her, "Are you curious about our sensei? Well, I'm not

surprised, U.A. has the best teacher in the country after all!”

“Right?” Asuka played along, grinning excitedly, “I even heard Ectoplasm works here! Pretty Onee-san, is it true that he lost both his legs because of a terrorist attack? My friend even showed me a clip of him fighting and it was awesome!”

Nakamura nodded, “It’s the truth, Ectoplasm sensei is our math teacher, but I heard he takes physical education for the 1C kids.”

The boy with the titanic ego snorted.

“Ignore him,” Nakamura said, “He’s always salty that our sensei doesn’t have a billboard ranking.”

Her heart prickled. Was *this* why her father wanted her to stay away? Because his students were assholes about his hero standing?

“Shut up, Yamamoto! Sensei doesn't need a grand title to hand your ass to you!”

“That’s right! He’s a little screwed in the head, but he’s making us into better heroes!”

“Sadako sensei doesn’t give a shit about what you think of him, the only thing your big mouth is going to land on us is in a field of mine!”

“Yeah! Stuff your prejudice up your ass!”

Okay, so not *all* his students were assholes... but screwed in the head? *Sadako* sensei? Minefields?

“Will you all stop swearing?” Nakamura bellowed, aggressively pointing to where she was.

They all simmered down, even Yamamoto with his inflated ego returned to his seat after considerable grumbling. But Nakamura and a few other students sat beside her on the lifted space where the beige podium was placed.

“So, what brings you here, little angel?”

Asuka pressed the tip of her shoe on the polished blue floor, blinking when her reflection stared back at her. “Papa brought me here,” she answered simply. “And my name’s Aizawa Asuka.”

The response Nakamura gave amused her for two reasons. One: they were unaware of their teachers' full names. Two: they assumed she was Hizashi and Kayama's kid because they were the only married couple among the staff members the students were aware of.

"Damn really? I knew sensei was married, but who knew they had a kid?"

"Well, she *does* look as pretty as Midnight." a bashful student added.

Asuka wanted to laugh.

"Hey kid, if you're in this class that probably means you lost your way. This is 1A, Present Mic's in charge of 1C."

Another brunette nodded to the statement, "Yeah, I can take you there. You don't want to be here when our sensei arrives, he'll probably make you cry."

Now she didn't want to leave. Just what did her father do to these kids?!

"Why's your sensei so scary?" she asked instead.

"We'd rather not say, it isn't good for children's ears." Nakamura denied, avoiding her gaze when Asuka tried to flutter her lashes to gain her answers.

Luckily not everyone was as precautionous as Nakamura.

"He's *completely* off his rockers." a student with blue skin spoke, her eyebrows reaching her hairline. "I mean I thought the dude was a bit eccentric at first, but it's U.A, right? Everything's a little crazy here. Then *that* loud mouth over with his posh bit— posse decided to ridicule him over his appearance on the first day of school." Her thumb directed at Yamamoto and his crowd, "And Sadoko sensei *likes* to say he isn't gettin' revenge for the first-day debacle whenever we bring it up, but we all know he's lying."

Another student with flaming red hair and charcoal eyes slammed the table with his pencil case, "He's totally lying! Because of Yamamoto's loud mouth, we *all* have to bear the brunt of his wrath— Kid, our sensei made us play hide-and-seek for a test, and guess what happened? I'll tell you what happened!"

His charcoal eyes lit orange and he seemed near tears, "Five hours!

Five whole freaking hours and we weren't allowed to go home until we found him— that sadistic bum, he failed *everyone* for our incompetence in utilizing our quirks!” Now his hair was on fire and Asuka didn't even have the heart to feel sorry for them. Who asked them to provoke the pinnacle of pettiness?

“Hey I may have started taunting him, but you all contributed! Don't make me out to be the only villain!” Yamamoto screeched.

“Ah, remember the day we all fought him at once?” A student with a lizard face chirped, though her smile was extremely forced, “He made a deal to give us a full grade on the condition that we steal the green scrunchie on his wrist.”

“Bah! Don't even remind me, just how does he move around like that when he drags his feet on the ground and sleeps on the floor like a freaking worm!”

Asuka blinked up at the blue-skinned student, “Then why's he called Sadako sensei?” she asked with feigned oblivion.

“Isn't the name obvious enough?” she answered, tilting her head, “He moves around like a ghost with his pale skin and disheveled hair. And dude *literally* has red eyes even if he isn't using his quirk, so there's *plenty* of occasions where he just appears out of thin air and hands out heart attacks like street food flyers.” the student shrugged, “Don't worry kid, Ishikawa will take you to your otou-san's class before sensei comes, so you don't have to feel scared.”

No sooner had she said that a familiar chakra core neared her radar, a few seconds later the enormous door slid open, and the whole class went mute.

Now, it was no secret that Asuka was the more *openly* affectionate among the two. It was just that the *audience* didn't know that. And the audience not knowing was just more entertaining for her.

Springing up from her seat, she rushed up to him and hugged his legs. “Papa!”

The temperature in the room went down by several degrees.

He hummed, patting her head fondly, “My class's going to start, you can go wait in the principal's office.”

She nodded, taking two steps to leave, but not before twirling around

to face the gobsmacked teenagers.

“Bye Onee-san’s, Onii-san’s, it was really fun talking to you, I’ll be looking forward to your debut!”

Then she was gone, leaving a bunch of agitated teenagers in her wake. At least now they knew not to judge a book by its cover.

22nd December, 3100

“Are you guys idiots?” Asuka snapped, looming at both her friends with her hands on her hips. “What happened to all the warnings I gave you?”

“They were bullying Izuku!” Katsuki shouted.

“That’s right, they were bullying me!” Izuku backed, nodding his head furiously.

“You think I don’t know that?” The youngest among the three snarled, “Just *what* do you think I’m mad about?! I did say self-defense was *fine*, but beating them up black and blue is *not* self-defense! They’re the same age as you, and they’re ignorant, I get that, but using the teachings I give you to do things like this is something I forbid!”

“We’ll apologize!” Izuku said immediately.

“Yeah, we’ll say s..rry..” Katsuki grumbled.

Asuka rolled her eyes, “Apologizing won’t be enough. With this level of violence, you both might as well be suspended, or expelled from school. This was *not* a friendly brawl, you both might be beaten up, but that is nothing compared to what that pile of shit looks like.” she threw her thumb back at the stack of kids grumbling and groaning near the snow-covered see-saw.

“Expelled?!”

“Asuka-chan...”

Katsuki looked positively frazzled, Izuku was near tears.

Asuka decided it was time to stop scaring the pair of eight-year-olds.

"Then you'll heed my warnings this time?" she asked with a raised brow.

They nodded immediately.

"You'll *only* ever fight when there's an absolute need for it?"

Both of them answered simultaneously.

"Fine then," she said, leaving them as she walked to the pile of shit. Crouching near a bluenette who flinched almost immediately upon her presence, she lowered her palm, healing his wounds. Then moved on to the next piece of shit.

"Now as for you all," she regarded the healed, dazed kids sitting on the playground, "patronize my friend about his quirk status again and I'll personally break your bones and toss you into the ocean, is that clear?"

Of course, she wouldn't *actually* do that. There were more viable methods for dealing with the ignorant.

They scrambled almost immediately after that, one of the stupider ones throwing a shaky threat on how they were going to get them back for the humiliation, the others were fairly sensible and retreated wordlessly. At least most of them wouldn't attempt to ridicule Izuku anymore.

"You guys should ask your parents to enroll you into a dojo," she said, taking Katsuki's hand first as her palm hovered over his knuckles.

"Why? We already said we won't do it again!" Katsuki barked, panic clear in his eyes.

"That's right, from now on, I'll just let them bully me, their words don't affect me anyways!" Izuku said, making her snort.

"That's not why I'm saying this." Asuka retorted, pouring her healing chakra into mending the red-eyed boy's busted lips and a bruised jaw. "Don't you guys ever question how I know all of this when I don't get any formal training?" She didn't wait for an answer, "Well, papa's getting suspicious and he won't take my excuses for long. And that *especially* applies to cases like this where you both are beating up kids twice your size."

"What difference does it make?" Katsuki persisted, flinching when her

hands grazed the scratches under his jaw.

She laughed in answer, moving on to Izuku.

“Hey Time bomb, now that I think about it, how *do* you know how to fight so well?” he pondered, tilting his head, “Why’s your quirk named Erasure when that isn’t the only quirk you have?”

This kid, he was asking her this question *now* ?

She started with Izuku’s scraped shin and knees, then stitched back the scratches on his forearms, “Why don’t you take a guess?” she replied, sarcasm blatant in her tone.

Katsuki frowned, “Does Oji-san also have dual quirks or something?”

Izuku tutted, “Kacchan, don’t you get it? It’s a *secret* .”

Asuka blinked.

“What *secret*? ” Katsuki whispered, clearly mind-boggled.

“That Asuka-chan has a healing quirk. It’s clear that Oji-san doesn’t have similar quirks, and do you remember that one time we were at her house and Oji-san got a nasty cut while peeling apples for us? Asuka-chan didn’t step in to heal him, so it’s obviously a secret.”

Asuka realized she severely underestimated Izuku’s mind prowess.

“What?” the blond repeated, “Why would you keep such a secret from Oji-san? He asked, distinctly confused. “Isn’t it great that you have dual quirks? I’d boast about having it.”

Of course, he’d boast about having it.

“Because my healing is not a quirk.” Well, *technically* it was. But it wasn’t her quirk, quirk.

She didn’t miss the way both of them stilled.

“I can’t elaborate on that point right now, but that’s all you guys have to know,” she explained, finishing with the greenette’s healing. “Papa can’t know about it, neither can any other adults. It’s a secret between us, alright?”

“...but...b-but you just healed those guys?” Katsuki stuttered.

Izuku, to her surprise, only nodded. “Okay, I’ll take it to my grave.”

He didn't have to go *that* far.

Asuka patted his newly healed knee, “Thanks Izuku.”

“If not a quirk, then *what?* ”

Well, she supposed one of them should have a normal reaction.

“Asuka-chan just said it’s a secret, why’re you slow today Kacchan?” Izuku reprimanded, “Should I explain it to you again?” he said, making Asuka suppress a laugh, “See, secrets are *meant* to be confusing, alright? It’s like Kaa-chan saying that my Tou-san is overseas, but I know he isn’t. She thinks her ‘secret’ is hidden, and I find it confusing that *she* thinks it’s a secret, but I think secrets are meant to be confusing so it’s alright!”

...*what the—*

Katsuki made a face, "The fuck kind of logic is that?"

Izuku rolled his eyes, “Asuka-chan said it’s not her quirk, so I believe her, I mean, has she ever lied to us?”

Katsuki shook his head.

“Right?” Izuku brightened.

Either way, this was favorable to her. “‘kay let’s go, I’ll treat you guys to ice cream,” she said, beckoning them to follow her.

They followed her without a second thought, snow crunching under their feet as they skipped out of the park with merry faces.

9th April, 3101

Asuka had a lot more free time after Katsuki and Izuku enrolled in a dojo. Her evenings spent on tutoring and sparing with them went to more strolls around her neighborhood, baking lessons with Mitsuki, and more book-hunting adventures. She also spent plenty of time with

her father since Kayama and Hizashi, contrary to his deduction, were exponentially busy with their married lives. Or more like Kayama was going through her first trimester, and her mood swings were off the charts.

She pranced on the side of the road with a strawberry lolly in hand, nearing the park to have some quality people-watching time. Taking a left, she hopped on the pavement, then scowled on impulse.

“Asuka-chan.”

She took an aggressive chunk out of her lolly and stared at the woman.

“What, you won’t greet you baa-chan?”

More like couldn't she fuck off?

“Papa said if any old obaa-san with blue eyes and blonde hair tries to talk to me I should run the other way immediately.”

“Shota said that?”

He actually didn't. He had only told her to *tell him* if she attempted anything shady. But talking to her was plenty shady.

“Yes.” she lied, turning to run the other way immediately.

“Wait,” her grandmother said— *pleaded* , “won’t you spare me a few minutes? Please?”

Asuka didn't want to. There was no use in maintaining such a relationship. She was her granddaughter, so what? Was this woman trying to be nice to her while her relationship with her father was still in tatters?

“I have freshly made anmitsu cups.”

Well, she supposed she could spare *five* minutes of her precious time.

They settled on a park bench a few meters from the playground. She sat on one end, her grandmother sitting on the other. Then she took out the anmitsu cups from her bag and placed them between them.

She claimed her bribe— her anmitsu cups,

“....does Shota speak badly of me? Is that why you hate me?” her

grandmother spoke tentatively.

More like Asuka had seen a very interesting spectacle when she was only a few months old and couldn't wipe out the feelings of disgust she had for her. "Papa doesn't speak ill of you," she answered, opening the cup, and discarding it along with the empty lolly stick, "but Papa doesn't seem to like you either, so I don't like you."

The old woman sighed. "I see."

"Why doesn't he like you?"

"I...failed him." she smoothed over her formal skirt. "I would say he hates me for a good reason. I despised Shota for quite a while because he resembled my late husband. Being a single mother, took a heavy toll on me; finding jobs, managing the house, looking after a kid that always reminded me of what I had lost...it all just piled onto me and he bore the brunt of it all. I regret it, I really do." Her blue eyes shined genuinely.

"By the time I came to my senses, it was already too late. Shota hates me and wants nothing to do with me." she chuckled mirthlessly, making her face look more aged than it was.

"Then why are you trying so hard with me?" Asuka retorted, munching on a piece of strawberry.

She sighed again. "I don't know, it's not like I'm going to fix anything by talking to a granddaughter who hates me."

Well, at least she had that figured out.

Asuka chewed on thinly sliced bananas and Kiwis, relishing the burst of flavors in her mouth.

"You know, I was very curious." her grandmother spoke again, "Shota...it's not like I knew much about him to begin with except for how gloomy and career-driven he was."

That's how she described her son.

"And as far as I knew, he wasn't involved with any other woman except for your... your kaa-san."

Asuka didn't miss her grandmother's face scrunching at the end of the sentence. It was similar to how her father would scrunch his face

whenever he cleaned the litter box.

"I met her, your kaa-san, I mean."

...was this some sort of bait? Was she supposed to care?

"Read the case files and everything," she continued, pity apparent in her eyes.

Asuka tossed her cup into the bin and started her second cup. "I'm not curious about her. I already know she's a terrible person, and Papa's already agreed to let me see her if I wanted to— which I *don't* . He's enough for me."

An odd expression took over her face, red-painted lips pursing as her hold on the handbag tightened.

"Okay," she finally said, nodding somberly. "It wasn't my intention to make you meet her, but I just thought you'd be a little curious about who she was. I know the troubles of a single parent—"

"Aizawa-san , " Asuka cut in, her face blank except for her stuffed cheeks. "I don't know the reason why you'd make the effort to visit me. You're feeling guilty for how you treated Papa? Then fix that. Nothing's going to change if you keep reaching out to me." The hurt on grandmother's face didn't move her heart, "Be direct with Papa if you want to fix things, he's a gentle person with a soft heart, and he *might* be willing to forgive you if you put in a butt load of effort."

She hauled her final cup into the bin along with the plastic spoon, "You're still his kaa-san, his dislike for you shows a lot of feelings even if you can't see it."

She jumped off the bench, dusting her pants.

Her grandmother was still her father's mother, even if she *did* treat him terribly. But she was willing to mend her faults, atone for her sins, and felt *guilty* . That itself showed that she was better than her mother. The past couldn't be dissolved and simply forgotten, but the future was uncertain and full of possibilities, so who knew if her grandmother would manage to receive her father's forgiveness?

"Asuka-chan," her grandmother called.

Asuka looked up, finding blue eyes brimming with tears, bearing an odd semblance of a melting iceberg.

She remembered the jabs and jeers. The viper words and discouraging taunts she had imparted the first time they met. She remembered the tautness in her posture and the sheer frost in her gaze.

There was none of that taciturnity now.

Asuka was forcibly pulled into a hug, too shocked to push her away.

“Baa-chan will win you both over!” she wailed, halting any struggle, “I-I’m sorry for being terrible!” The hug tightened, and despite the former shock and the twinge of repulsion, the soft smell of fabric softener convinced her to stay.

Asuka patted her back awkwardly as she attempted to comfort her.

After what seemed to be a rather long session of emptying her tear ducts, she detached from her, still sniffing and red. “I’m sorry, I was...I was just very overwhelmed.”

Asuka hummed in reply.

“Since...since I soiled your shirt, won’t you accept this from me?”

Her eyes bulged, witnessing the thickness of the money her grandmother produced from her glossy handbag.

“It’s fine!”

“Is this much not enough? I have more.” her grandmother urged.

Was she out of her mind?!

“I don’t need that much money and Papa will probably hang me upside down if I accept something like this!”

The woman sniffed, tucking her wad of cash into her bag.

Then somehow or the other, Asuka managed to weasel herself out of the park, freeing herself from the emotional clutches of her grandmother by giving her a list of herbs she needed to concoct an eye tonic, and her grandmother was too occupied with her jubilation to consider why her request was so odd.

“I thought you liked Edgeshot.”

“Yeah, but not enough to get a bag with his face in it.” Asuka said, scrunching her nose at the blue and red atrocity, “Do you know how badly that would go with my clothes? I have a reputation to keep, you know?”

Shota snorted, “Your classmates call you *Akuma* Asuka, I don’t think your reputation can get any worse.”

“What’s wrong with the name? I like it.” She picked a set of sparkly pens from the rack, placing them inside the basket her father was wheeling, “And it’s much better than *Sadako* sensei.”

“I happened to like the nickname too.” he returned smoothly, his unoccupied hand reaching for a case of new pencils and two neon erasers.

The eight-year-old rolled her eyes, focusing on the list instead.

Today’s shopping venture was dedicated to Kayama’s upcoming baby shower. Her father was busy during day time with his teaching job, and he’d usually adjust his patrol between 9 pm to 3 am, but ever since the hero coursework studies had initiated, he switched back to 6 pm shifts, and agreed to accompany her to this trip after convincing him of how happy both his friends would be that he, *Aizawa Shota*, did something so out of the ordinary.

“Papa, which gender did you wager on?”

“Is there a point to this wager?”

“Of course there is, the winners get *money!* ”

“I have money.” he retorted, gently pushing her to the next aisle which happened to hold a variety of party supplies.

She almost tumbled, saved from colliding into a rack of streamers when he tugged her collar, and steadied her, “So do other people who’re betting on the baby’s gender,” she insisted, acting like she hadn’t just tripped over her own feet, “even I placed a bet.”

“Should I be worried that you’re into gambling when you can’t even walk straight?”

“I can walk straight!”

He gave her a pointed look, “You’re not even denying the gambling bit.”

Asuka shrugged, “Well, seeing that you’re not participating, I’m not going to give you the winning gender.”

He ruffled her hair, “Sure kid, do your best.”

There was a part of her that squawked at him for treating her platinum-level information so insignificantly when he was the *only* one she offered it to, but another more rational part sang a different tune, celebrating at the prospect of winning while other people would think it was a mere fluke.

Aizawa Asuka was, after all, a living, breathing cheat character in this world.

After shopping all the stationeries needed for the event, their next stop happened to be the bakery. As they entered the cheery premise wafting with the smell of heaven, her mouth salivated. There was nothing that topped desserts. *Nothing* .

No sooner had they taken their seat to order the sample cakes, a tremor overtook the establishment, rising commotion amongst the customers, and immediately, her father pulled her next to him, his sharp eyes scanning for the source of the sound.

When it was clear that they were safe where they were, he stood up, telling her to stay put as he rushed out the door.

Asuka couldn't stay still.

Her legs itched to run towards the source of shrieks and screams, even sirens were blaring and more people exited the bakery. At this point, she followed them outside to get a scope of the situation, her eyes darting to the large bouts of smoke, a raging sea of fire in the place of the mall they had just exited.

‘*BANG!*’

Another tremor shook the ground, shrieks and screams rising all around her. She miserably failed to keep her legs stable within a cluster of people running for cover, and a strangled scream escaped her when someone trampled on her hand. It tempted her to blast her

way through the overwhelming crowd, she coaxed herself with the thought of how they were *just panicking civilians*. She laced her limbs with chakra and trudged her way against the current to reach where her father probably was. Then something wrapped around her torso and she was flying in the air.

“I told you to stay inside,” he grunted, disgruntled as he observed the footprints on her shirt, and blood on her arm.

Asuka frowned, “I was worried for you!”

He grumbled incoherently and didn't unwrap her from his weapon bindings as he jogged over to the secured premise surrounded by police tape. Stretching it over his head, he entered the zone swarming with professionals, heading straight in the direction where the medics were at.

*

“It's bad, the main entrance is blocked because of the latest explosion and we're still not certain of how many people are stuck inside. The drones we sent over the mall aren't helping either, the heat is too intense. We'll get them back up once the fire's tame.” Sansa glanced over to the ginormous wreckage clad in flames and smoke, “Manual suggested suspending the heroes along with the firefighters into the mall through the escalator, they'll initiate the action as soon as the central plaza is within their sight.”

Naomasa sighed, “Right, and what about Perino?”

“We sent a request to his agency, he should be on his way.” Eizo spoke, pocketing his phone, “And Thirteen is also on her way.”

“Detective.” a voice interrupted them.

Naomasa turned his head, acknowledging Eraserhead with a nod. “I'm going in with Manual and the others on the first escalator.” he said, Naomasa didn't miss the oxygen mask hanging around his neck, “My daughter is getting treated in ambulance three, could you please make her stay in your car? I don't have anyone that can take her home right now.”

Naomasa blinked, Eraserhead had a daughter? “Sure,” he said instead.

Eraserhead nodded, “Thanks.”

And then he was off, jogging towards the firetruck supporting the escalator.

“Since when did *he* have a daughter?” Eizo questioned, quirking a brow.

Sansa’s whiskers twitched, “Fresh outta high school, probably.”

Naomasa *normally* didn't dwell on things that weren't any of his business, especially regarding people’s personal lives, but for Sansa to say something so unorthodox, did raise a minor question in his head.

“What? Don’t look at me like that.” Sansa huffed, “I have a sensitive nose, remember? Eraserhead is a familiar face in the police station. He always managed to smell like milk powder and baby cologne.”

Eizo snorted, but before he could retaliate, Perino entered the barricaded area and headed straight for them.

Naomasa left the briefing to his partner, turning to walk to ambulance no.3, his eyes scanning for Eraserhead’s daughter. There were two people in the ambulance, one was an adult wearing medical garbs, the other was a small kid who was observing the strips of bandages on her arm, her shirt soiled with footprints and dirt, and braided black hair disheveled.

As he went on approach the kid, her head tilted up, staring into his eyes that seemed to...seemed to *scrutinize* him? Then the effect disappeared and he was gazing into innocent green gems, and she stood up, hopping off the ambulance, bidding the nurse goodbye.

“You’re the detective Oji-san, right?” she asked, adjusting the strap of her green bag. “Papa said I’m supposed to listen to you until he comes back.”

“Um, yes, detective Tsukauchi Naomasa, please to meet you..?...”

“Aizawa Asuka.” she filled in, beaming so brightly that it competed with the flames engulfing the mall.

“Alright, Asuka-chan,” he said, offering a smile as he gently guided

her to where his car was, “Eraserhead told me to make sure you stayed safe until he comes back, so you’ll be staying inside my car.”

“Can you leave the window down, oji-san?” she requested from beside him.

Naomasa bit his cheek. The inside of his car was mildly soundproof, and with the chaos going on within the crime scene, he didn't want to risk her hearing any gorey talks or spare her attention from the onslaught of people that were being rescued and treated.

“I don't think that’s a good—”

“ *Please?* ” she cut him off, tugging his coat along with her plea, “I want to see Papa come out safely!”

“A-alright.”

“Thank you oji-san!”

Soon he had settled her inside with the window mid-way down, then returned to his team who was lingering only a few meters away from his car. “Did Perino make a deduction?”

“It isn’t looking too good.” Sansa informed, “Only eighty-seven people made it out before the main entrance collapsed, and calculating the number of people rescued from the north exit, it’s a total of sixty-two people. One escalator just came down with a dozen people, but there’s still an estimate of four to five hundred people stuck inside—”

‘BANG!’

Naomasa flinched, his gaze landing on the new and increased bouts of smoke bursting out of the mall.

“This isn't good,” Eizo said, the older man’s eyes landing on the lowering escalator.

“Oi, head captain, what the hell just happened?” Sansa yelled, his ear twitching at the frequency.

Naomasa clapped the orange-furred man’s back, signaling him to calm down. There was no way the firemen would know what the source of the explosion was, all they could do was estimate. Judging by the sequence of the explosions, Naomasa pondered whether this was timed or just the consequences of the raging fire.

Shortly after the eruption, Thirteen arrived on the scene along with Edgeshot. The latter left to aid with the north exit while Thirteen cleared the rubble littering the main entrance, subsequently making their jobs a great deal easier. Gear, who was included in the first escalator party that left with Manual and Eraserhead stayed behind on his third trip down, securing the entrance with his metal beams, allowing an easy passage for the firefighters and the remaining heroes to access the hedged-in civilians.

Naomasa was so preoccupied with everything that he only had the time to check on Eraserhead's daughter when Perino confirmed a drastic decrease in people entrapped in the mall. But his stomach flipped when he realized that the car was *empty*, void of the person he left inside it. Then—

‘BANG!’

**

Asuka knew she was going to get in a whole lot of trouble for being the hard-headed thing that she was.

Her father told her to stay put in the bakery, she stayed for mere *seconds* before being trampled under a mob of terrified people.

Her father told her to stay with the detective until he was back, and she planned to, but the explosions scared the shit out of her.

Despite the agitation swirling above her navel, she still trusted her father to be a hero, and do his *job* as a hero— but heroes weren't invincible.

But not once did he come out from the inferno like Manual, Gyro, and Kore were doing, so she did what she did best— she seeped her chakra into the ground and controlled it; scanning the ignited structure, crawling it under the debris, and skipping over the unfamiliar cores, with her hands tightened on her knees she focused her entire being on locating that one familiar core of chakra— the same sphere of white that she'd even manage to recognize in her sleep.

When she located it though, her limbs advanced subconsciously.

His sphere was dimming.

Her heart thrashed in her ribcage as she utilized her flash step, zooming around the cluster of busy professionals with no trouble. Thirteen had cleared the entrance, but her father was much closer to the north exit, even though she'd prefer climbing walls, with the infrastructure being so weak and piping hot, she might be the cause of someone getting buried under concrete.

Inside was suffocatingly hot, her eyes prickled with the gas and her nose twitched with the heavy air. From her memory of the blueprint she made of the premise, she scurried through the rummage, careful of all the other buzzing presences she might stumble into. But when she came across a cry, *a child's cry*, her conscience took a stab.

Stupid Shinobi Ethics—

Wrapping her scarf around her nose and mouth, she whispered words she hadn't said since she was four, "Kage Bunshin-no Jutsu."

A clone submerged, sucking half her reserves along with it. "Help as many people as you can, and cast a Henge on yourself— don't you dare let anyone know it's me!" she barked, taking off once more. Shoving the door to the emergency staircase, she raced upstairs, blowing away any chunks of concrete blocking her path.

(What she didn't hear due to her frazzled state of mind was the clone yelling the same piece of advice at her)

With her shirt sticking to her back, and hands covered in burns and scratches, she busted into the fourth floor, zooming towards the West Food Court where her father was. She almost swore out loud when she spotted heroes loading people into the escalator, and while ducking abruptly, she ran into a white-hot door handle.

A choked cry erupted when her the skin on her arm melted with a nasty sizzle. But she didn't have time to give it a second glance, the adrenaline keeping her sane as she trudged through the littered floor, nearly crying out in triumph when she successfully made it to her destination.

She activated her quirk to get a clear insight into where she was, spotting his white aura among the other scattered colors. She rushed straight ahead without any reluctance, her lungs closing in at the sight that greeted her.

"You better not be dead!" she screeched, kneeling beside the motionless body smothered in soot and dust, "Dammit, open your

eyes!" her hands pumped in healing chakra, the mint color inspecting his body as she tried to keep her hands from shaking.

"No wonder..." she trailed off, missing the way he shifted. "Where the hell is your oxygen mask, you stupid old man?! Your lungs are overflowing with toxic gas—" growling, she used one palm to filter the toxins in his lung while releasing the waste gas out her other hand.

"...As..uka..?..."

"I'm not Asuka." she returned smoothly, taking off her bag pack, and securing another scarf from it. Using her strength, she helped him sit against a counter, wrapping the scarf around his nose and mouth. It wasn't the most effective mask, but they were on the fourth floor and all she had to do was make his presence known to one of the many rescue workers operating in the building while she skedaddled out the premise, and into the car she was supposed to be in.

It wasn't like her father, in his befuddled state, would *know* it was her who saved him. He could barely keep his consciousness.

Standing up, she changed her form into a much more tall individual. She couldn't possibly drag him around, could she? She barely reached his torso. "Come on, we're going to get out of here," she said, heaving him up and hanging his arm around her shoulder.

"D..ughter."

She gritted her teeth. *Curse his sharp deduction*, he was *barely* functioning, did he have to put so much effort into recognizing who was dragging him out of this sweltering inferno? She'd need him to be at least as dumb as Koala to believe the lies if she was caught in this situation.

"I'm just your average, helpful civilian, Hero-san. Now let's hurry along, we need to get some fresh oxygen in your lungs!" she chirped, supporting his waist as they ambled out of the path she had cleared.

"..Li..ar.."

"We'll be there soon." She said instead, activating her quirk, and inspecting any presence in sight. Luckily the place she had managed to run into the scorching door knob was occupied with plenty of people and she quickened her steps.

“...when we..get...home...you're...so...grounded...”

Why was his speech improving?!

Her perturbation manifested in a peal of maniacal laughter, “Alright, this supporting-you thing, while we both limp over to safety, is getting kind of tiring, so I'm just going to carry you,” she swiped him off his feet, “It'll be much quicker, Hero-san!”

“...in so much....trouble.” his eyes fluttered open and she quickened her pace, jumping over debris and kicking the ones she couldn't hop over. Fortunately, she spotted a team of rescuers lurking in the intersecting hallway, so she placed him near a sturdy store that didn't have any flames affecting it.

Crouching, she patted his chest to relay her farewell. “You don't have to pay me back, I'm a very selfless soul so I save people for free *all* the time.”

A shiver ran down her spine when he tilted his head, half-lidded eyes achieving to look scathing even when he was at his weakest.

She offered him a shaky smile, taking that as a queue to leave. Then—

‘BANG!’

With an ear-shattering blast, the ground beneath her shook fervently so that she could only hold on with the help of her chakra. Her eyes lay on her father who had slumped to a side from all the convulsion, wreckage perilously raining near him. Before she could so much as *move* to fend him off the attack, an ominous creak yawned above her, a precariously hanging beam a mere breath away from crushing her vulnerable father.

A more logical part of her voiced there were more viable options.

Another argued the safety of *other* innocent people if she did so.

The veteran in her whispered sinister words.

But the reckless spirit in her roared in defiance, and she loaded her soles with chakra, crumbling the ground beneath her as she lunged for the still body susceptible to the oncoming crush. And when the accursed thing landed on her back and made her choke on her scream, she was just glad she wasn't dying from hunger.

Chapter End Notes

Hopefully the next chapter will be more angsty than this one~
Also, terribly sorry if the action scene came out wonky, I'm fairly new at dishing out such scenes _(ツ)_/

If any of you want to reach out to me here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)
Hope this was good read!

List of OC's:

Ami- Aizawa's student

Ishikawa- Aizawa's student (surname only)

Yamamoto-Aizawa's student (surname only)

Nakamura- Aizawa's student (surname only)

Kore- hero

Perino- hero

Gear- hero

Gyro- hero

Choices

Chapter Summary

Breaking. Mending. Realising.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by: Grig9700

This chapter is going to be a bit heavy, so, yeah...

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

2nd October, 3101

Shota had an ominous dream.

In the dream, he's saving people like he's supposed to. He'd cleared rubble with the help of his colleagues and rescued injured people, he'd coaxed scared children with the promise of safety, and he had even given up his oxygen mask to a pregnant woman. After doing that Manual had told him to take a trip down the escalator to get a new mask because he wouldn't last very long in the burning premise brimming with hazardous gasses. Shota had quipped back a quick reply saying he would and ran towards another cry for help.

Maybe he should have listened, because right after he'd assisted an elderly couple and their grandchild, he wasn't able to keep his legs stable. Soon he was tripping over his own feet, and landed on the littered floor, hands struggling to heave himself up and back to safety.

In the dream, *in the exceedingly realistic dream*, he remembered losing consciousness which was *weird* because how could one lose consciousness in a dream?

It got more ominous from there.

His eight-year-old daughter had somehow apparated to where he was,

her face blurring in his eyes, but her voice was clear. Asuka called him an *old man* while proclaiming *he better not be dead*, and he pondered why she wasn't calling her *Papa* right before his worries busted to a more pragmatic conclusion; *Why the fuck was she here in the first place?*

The dream turned more unconventional. And Shota didn't care whether dreams weren't supposed to make sense, his daughter was somewhere she had no business being, even in his subconscious, it was unacceptable.

Asuka had a different appearance, (But that was just the workings of this ominous dream), he would recognize her bright orbs, and soothing voice anywhere. It made zero sense that his clumsy daughter would carry him *princess style*, nor was he happy about receiving such an eccentric vision, but then there was an ear-splitting rupture, sending his dastardly weak body to a topple from where his daughter who *proclaimed* she wasn't his daughter left him.

Soon after the quake, his sight diminished immediately. And through this ominous dream, he recalled with scary distinction, his *consciousness* only faded when an unknown force met with his body.

Now that he was sentient, the anomalous vision he had was setting off exceedingly distressing spikes inside him, and due to the severity of what he had inhaled and the apparent concussion he *needed* to get treated, he wasn't even allowed to appease his unambiguous need to see his daughter safe and sound where she was expected to be; inside detective Tsukauchi's car.

"Can I go now?" he gritted for the fourth time.

The neon-haired paramedic gave a small smile, but Shota knew she was irked from the way her eyebrows kept twitching. "I'd recommend you get a CT scan first, you're in no condition to continue your hero duties, Eraserhead-san."

"I get it, I'm not going to do anything strenuous, *now* can I leave?" he snapped, his patience hitting rock bottom.

He took her disapproval as an answer. Sliding off the bed he was seated on, he weaved past the plethora of other people at a high pace, his destination stark and clear. He could deal with the consequences of his injury later, but Asuka was more important now.

Shota was rarely a superstitious person, he didn't believe in astrology, or black cats crossing the road, or whatever the fuck people came up

with, but this nightmare he had achieved produced an itch inside him that he couldn't soothe, and he was sure it wasn't going to until he saw her safe.

Shota contemplated searching the cars, but he wasn't sure whose was whose, and the number of cars since he had first come to the scene had risen, so headed to where he was certain where the cat-headed detective would be.

Naomasa wasn't there.

"Oh, Eraserhead." Sansa called, "If you're here to find Tsukauchi then he's not here."

The bubble in his chest grew, "Where's he then?"

Eizo scratched his stubble, "He took off in a hurry, didn't tell us where he went."

His bone chilled, "My daughter," he said, almost scared to ask, "Which car is my daughter in?"

The thudding of his heartbeat was nearly unbearable as he skidded off in the direction Sansa pointed, his head pulsing and sides aching with the injuries he gained as he came to an abrupt halt in front of an empty car.

An empty car.

"Eraserhead!" gray eyes darted at the source of the voice, " *Your daughter* ," Naomasa panted, sweat manning his forehead, face contoured in a manner Shota didn't like in the least, "she was found under the rubbles just now."

The bubble finally popped.

*

Hizashi didn't know what to expect when he got an immensely distressing call from Thirteen asking him to go over to the Musutafa First Care hospital because his *niece* (That's what he flaunted around in the staffroom), was in a terrible accident. And as if that phone call wasn't aggravating enough, Shota didn't pick up his phone, so Hizashi

had to ditch patrol and scurry to the hospital, only to find his raven-haired best friend staring at the wall opposite to where he sat, his gray eyes blank as a dead fish.

Now he was deeply unsettled. “Sho, what the hell happened?” he prodded gently, taking a seat beside him.

The Mall explosion was breaking news right now. Did Asuka get caught in the middle of it? Was that what happened? It was a common conclusion, but that conclusion made his palms numb, and toes furl inside his boots. It was horrifying enough the first time Asuka managed to land herself in the hospital, but this time she was sent into *surgery* .

“...we were out shopping.” Hizashi winced at the monotonous tone. “It was a quick trip, shouldn't have been more than an hour. We made it out of the mall after that and went to a nearby bakery...”

Shota's recollection made his bones chill.

Hizashi found the facts of the situation more horrifying. If what Shota said was true, if they truly got out of the bomb-rigged mall safe and sound, if they managed to escape, if Asuka was supposed to be under the care of Tsukauchi while Shota attended to his job if Asuka had somehow managed to pass streams of professionals and reached the highest floor of the burning establishment just to save *Shota* — which was fucking outrageous because the kid was *eight* and had no means to do what Shota described to him.

“I know it sounds crazy.” Shota interrupted, Hizashi didn't miss the way his fist clenched. “But it wasn't a dream. Asuka was really there, she did *something*, and I'm here alive because of it, and she's in that ICU *fighting for her life because of it*.”

Hizashi's heart squeezed. “Asuka-chan's a fighter always has been.” he said, ignoring the large lump in his throat, “She'll get out of that surgery in no time.”

“You don't *get it* , Hizashi,” Shota said, voice cracking and horror filling his eyes. “She was covered in blood, her whole body was covered in blood and... and her leg was twisted. The fucking bone was sticking out of her...” he paused, taking in a shaky breath. Hizashi was about to suggest they stop talking because this was making him miserable too.

“It was like...” Shota trembled, “ *it was like Shirakumo all over again* .”

His chest seared.

“Sho,” he said, finding it extremely hard to support his friend with his usual optimism. “You should get cleaned up, the surgery will take up a few more hours.”

Shota shook his head, eyes directed at the metal doors guarding the operation theatre.

“I’m worried about her too.” he pressed, “But you need serious medical attention, the wound on your head is bleeding through the bandage. You have to be in top shape when you see her, Asuka-chan is a terrible nagger, you know?”

“No.”

Hizashi didn't attempt to convince him after that, but he did get a nurse to check out his wound and get him to drink a cup of coffee. The hospital wasn't a quiet place today, the intercom was buzzing in his ear like a fly, sirens sounded from afar, and ever so occasionally, people in scrubs were running in the corridors with their eyes reaching their forehead.

Hizashi was used to such chaos because of his line of work, but presently, sitting next to his somber best friend caked in ash and dust, the usual numbness he wore to such scenes was dissolved to nothingness.

It was like Shirakumo all over again...

But Shirakumo never survived the crash.

What was he supposed to do when Shota made such a blatant comparison? It certainly didn't give him hope.

Shota had given him a vague description of her condition, but Hizashi had received a more detailed one from a nurse he encountered on his venture for coffee. *‘...it’s one of the most terrible cases to come in tonight, Doctor Ume made a quick diagnosis with his quirk; heavy internal bleeding, spine fracture(s) , multiple abrasions, there were pieces of metal embedded near her lower back, and gosh... the poor kid even had a nasty compound fracture in her right tibia... we informed the guardian... Kami no one should ever go through such a thing...’*

He agreed, no one should ever go through such a thing. Especially such a pure soul like his Firefly.

'BAM!'

"Aizawa Shota-san?!" A horned nurse stepped out the metal door, "Please wear this and step into the surgery room!"

Hizashi blinked at the unorthodox request.

*

Shota fumbled with the suit the nurse had given him, wearing the gloves, masks, and other pieces of clothing before stepping inside the operation room.

"Aizawa-san?" Doctor Ito sounded, his tone bunched with so much worry that Shota presumed bad news.

But they would've given him the bad news outside, why the hell did he have to suit up for this?

"What's wrong with her?" he asked, eyes darting to the crowd of medics surrounding Asuka.

"Well, according to her file, her quirk's Erasure." Doctor Ito explained, his brows furrowed, "But strange markings are developing on her body. Her blood pressure keeps elevating in short intervals and we've resuscitated her two times because of this."

His heart dropped.

"It's precisely why we need your quirk, Aizawa-san, please make it so that her quirk does not act up while we're performing her surgery."

His heart crawled back to its place with newfound enthusiasm.

"I'll do it." he agreed without missing a beat.

The doctor nodded.

Wait —

"What markings are you talking about?" he demanded, regaining his senses. Erasure wasn't connected to any markings. It was an *optical quirk* that activated with distinct traits like changing eye colors and

aviating hair; there were no markings included in the description.

The doctor tilted his head, his finger pointing to the cluster of people surrounding the operating table, “The black markings spreading from her collar bones.”

Shota’s eyebrows furrowed, moving from the entrance, sliding past the tray containing a disturbing amount of stark, red stips of clothes. When he saw her though, bile rose in his throat.

Her right leg looked downright sinister, her posture on the bed was odd. The *bad* kind of odd. He could quite literally see her internal organs spilling out as another doctor stitched an organ he couldn't name while some other blue-gloved individual put a white strip inside her, only to dip it out with a fresh coat of red.

Her hands held burns that reflected his heart, innocent ivory skin marred in ugly browns, and flecks of red. Bruises littered everywhere he stared, her posture odd and crooked, the fucking bone still sticking out her leg. He clenched his hands and forced himself to breathe steadily, focusing on the odd marking the doctor had found.

In the middle of her collar bones, a hollow diamond gave leeway to the rest of the vines running up her eyes, the thick linings intersected oddly at her forehead, then dipped down the side of her face and disappeared somewhere behind her nape and beneath her shoulder.

“That doesn't have anything to do with erasure,” he pronounced, loud enough for Doctor Ito to hear.

“Page doctor Sanami.” Doctor Ito announced.

Promptly after, the ECG machine went wild, blaring noisily, signifying impending danger. Shota didn't need a reminder of why he was here. He activated his quirk.

“Aizawa-san!”

“I’m doing it!” he snapped back.

“Why isn't it working?!”

How was he supposed to know?!

“Dr Ito, her blood pressure is rising again!”

“Prepare the AED!”

“Clear the space!”

Why wasn't it working?!

“It’s spreading more rapidly than before!”

“Hurry up!”

Don’t die!

“ *Eek!* It’s wrapping around me too!”

“What?!”

“Where’s Dr Sanami?!”

“She’s on her way— Miyamura, don’t move from there!”

Don’t leave me!

“*Kyahh!*”

“Look at her wounds!”

Shota’s heartbeat was louder in his ear than the havoc in the operation theatre. It was wrapping around her more frantically, cladding around her like a second skin, intertwining around her chest, sliding across her abdomen, encasing her limbs—

‘*Crack*’

“Kami, this is...”

“Dr Ito...”

To Shota’s heightening terror, her body starts shifting on its own volition, making her abdomen jut upwards before she lands flat on her back.

‘*Rip*’ — ‘*squelch*’ — ‘*crack*’ —

The bone retreats, securing itself in its place, leaving a perfect unscathed leg.

Her organs form a sagacity of their own, returning inside where it’s supposed to, stitching itself back together, leaving no blemish in its wake.

“This...this is a miracle.”

Bruises fade like footprints on a beach, and her burns mutate to the baby skin she was meant to have.

‘Bam!’

“I’m here! I’m here! The hallways are very.. crowded... Did I miss something?”

**

“Accumulating a quirk in a high-stress situation isn’t unheard of, but Asuka-chan’s case is, more or less, the first of its kind.” Doctor Sanami concluded.

Shota honestly didn't give a shit, what mattered was that she wasn't dying anymore, and that was enough for him.

“I spoke to Doctor Ume before this, were you aware of a purple diamond between her collar bones before this incident?” The specialist inquired, clasping her hands on the opened file.

Shota shook his head.

“I see,” Doctor Sanami nodded, “then it must have manifested shortly after her accident.” She offered him a small smile, eyes crinkling at the corners, “Asuka-chan is extremely lucky then, the injuries she gained were potent enough to cripple her, but this miracle quirk...it saved her from the brink of death.”

Shota wanted to agree, but there was a bitterness lingering behind that halted him from doing so. This manifestation of a new quirk believed to be formed due to mass accumulation of stress; didn't sit well with him, not when the brutal rollercoaster of a ride Asuka had to go through to emerge it, not when she had risked *her* life for *his* to achieve it.

For him, no matter the outcome, the truth never stops prodding his mind; *he failed as a father*. That was plain and clear. Asuka shouldn't have been there in the first place, he should've either *died* in that scorching building or been saved by someone that wasn't his *daughter*

— Shota failed her, he let her end up in such a horrifying state, and the memory seared itself into his mind, assuring him that it would never leave.

“Yes, it did,” Shota said instead.

“We’ll have to wait till Asuka-chan wakes up to conclude the paperwork, but in the meantime—”

“When is she going to wake up?” he interrupted, head throbbing from the wound he received. He should get it treated now that Asuka was out of danger.

She unclasped her hand and set it on her lap, “That’s something I can’t pinpoint, you should refer to her attending doctor.”

Judging by her stiff face, Shota presumed bad news.

3rd October, 3101

[Day one]

“I’m extremely sorry!”

Shota blinked slowly, slightly taken back by the bowing man before him.

“You told me to watch over her, but I was too preoccupied to check on her, and when I *did* she was already gone—”

White noise. His rambling sounded like white noise. Shota supposed he should hear the man out for how sincere he seemed, but he wasn’t feeling very generous at the moment.

After the events that unraveled after the phenomenon in the operating room, Asuka was wheeled off to a private room under Hizashi’s supervision, he was left to deal with the doctors and all the formalities. Shortly after he had a shower, a change of clothes, and a proper scan of his injuries, the fucking hero commission hounded him, sending a text stating an appointment three days after— and as much

as Shota knew that a case like Asuka's was bound to be on their radar for security reasons and that the hero commission wasn't just for recruiting potential hero candidates, validating licenses, and more of whatnots, he was still ticked off.

Hizashi had forced him to eat something while he sat beside Asuka's still figure. Kayama came along at one point, and as much as he loved his friends, she started bawling at the sight of her, only adding to his guilt and elevating his throbbing head. Hizashi ended up taking her home right after that, and thankfully he didn't receive any visitors after. But it wasn't like he could catch a wink of sleep either.

Shota was dead tired, heavily guilt-ridden, and sleepless, so Naomasa dropping in something-something eight in the morning, he didn't bother to check, was not the least bit welcome.

Although there *was* a part the detective could be held accountable for, he knew the reality of it was much more complex. The crime scene was a hectic place, with so many professionals on sight, and a plethora of things to manage, he could accept that Naomasa would be too preoccupied to accommodate Asuka— and who in the layers of hell would even *think* an eight-year-old would infiltrate an actively oxidizing building?

Heck even Shota couldn't ideate that, what would the detective, a simple colleague, predict?

But couldn't he have checked on her twice? Or even thrice? It wasn't like Shota asked him to coddle her.

He understood that Asuka retained altruistic traits, and as much as it was a good thing, it was equally a bad thing— *for his heart* . Like the time she sprinted onto a busy road to save a dog's life, or that time where she pushed a random kid away from an oncoming swing during playtime, and retained a terrible nosebleed.

There also that day when he took her out for shoe shopping, and no sooner had he turned to order drinks, she decided to perch on a gigantic tree to retrieve a balloon for some kid nearby. Not to mention how she went around beating up kids bigger than her because they scorned Izuku, and unequivocally supported Izuku's dream of being the first quirkless hero even when Inko, his mother, was hesitant about it.

And now *this*, plunging into a fire to save her pathetic father.

He sighed, despite the masses of words on his tongue, he concluded it with a simple statement. "It's fine," he said. *It wasn't* . But it wasn't as if Naomasa apologizing was going to raise her from the coma, nor was he going to hold a grudge. "Asuka has always been an impulsive child." His half-lidded gaze observed Naomasa's pursed lips and shaking fists. "I can't blame you, Tsukauchi-san. This was unpredictable. If anything, I'm the one to blame for putting her anywhere near the crime scene."

Naomasa bit his cheek, "Still, you gave me a minute task while risking your life inside the fire, and because of my ineptitude, your daughter was injured to such an extent." he put a hand on his chest and gave a slight bow, "Even if by some miracle, she is healed and unscathed right now, I cannot overlook my mistake. I am *truly* sorry, Aizawa-san."

"Like I said," he drawled, slumping on his seat, "it's fine."

After the dissatisfied detective left, he let his head fall on the bed next to her scorch-free hand, grunting at how the stiff sheets brushed his skin and closed his eyes.

*

By 12:52, the room was the most crowded since eight something-something.

Both Midoriya's and the Bakugou's dropped by with arms full of gifts. From Inko he received a warmly packed lunch for himself, and a cloth bag full of fruits. Izuku had sauntered off to the bedside and nestled on the chair he was on mere seconds before their arrival. Mitsuki gifted him a whole jar of eclairs, two packets of caramel candy, and one pack of candy cane for— '*For when the little brat wakes up!*'

Masaru gave him a fresh bouquet of peonies along with a fancy-looking jar of coffee, and of course, Katsuki joined Izuku, both kids watching Asuka with almost teary eyes.

Izuku started sniffing. "O-ji-san, she's not going to be like this forever, right?"

His chest seared. "She'll wake up." He just didn't know when, but

she'd wake up. She *had* to wake up.

"Stupid 'zuku," Katsuki grumbled, "Time bomb's not going to die, she's too awesome to die."

Izuku giggled, wiping at his eyes, "I should've recorded that."

Shota turned away from the heartwarming sight, putting down the gifts on the small coffee table near the leather sofa.

"We heard the details from Hizashi-kun. It's truly terrible that she was stuck in the mall during such a time."

So Hizashi didn't tell them everything .

He swallowed, shifting the table to the side so that they could take a seat, "Don't worry." Mitsuki whispered this time, "Katsuki and 'Zuku don't know anythin' much except that she just got hurt badly and had to be hospitalized."

With the coffee mix in hand, he turned to face them once more, eyes meeting Inko's mellow ones, then shifted to Mitsuki. Masaru was with the kids, lightly commanding them not to do anything brash.

Shota made coffee from the tiny kitchen. He served them in paper cups, and having nothing for the kids, he exited the room to find the nearest vending machine, slotting in two coins, and retrieving two cans of orange juice. As he trudged towards the room with two cool cans in each of his hands, his far peripheral vision caught a bob of blonde hair.

... Kaa-san?

His assumption was confirmed when he caught her eyes, looking like a deer caught in headlights before she ducked under her glossy black bag, scurrying out as if he was blind to her scuttling towards the exit.

What the fuc— Nope. He was *not* dealing with this today. Tolerating her at home whenever she dropped into his house with no warning whatsoever while having plenty of anmitsu cups for Asuka was enough to grind his gears, he did *not* have time to indulge her today.

Huffing, he returned to the room and gave both kids their beverages.

"Oji-san, you look more hurt than Asuka-chan," Izuku commented, an orange mustache painted on his upper lips.

“Well, duh,” Katsuki sipped his juice, “Time bomb only fainted from the explosion, Oji-san’s a Hero, so obviously he got more hurt than her.”

He wished that was the case.

“Oh, right!” Izuku chirped, tugging his yellow bag from one shoulder as he zipped it open and dug inside it, “I made get-well-soon cards for both of you!”

Shota ruffled the green fluff of hair, a small smile tugging his lips at the way Izuku’s pine-colored orbs shimmered. It was so much like his daughter’s. “I’ll put this up on the side table.”

“And this is from me,” Katsuki took out his bag, carefully taking out papers— *origami*, he realized. “It’s a bear and a cub,” he said, ear tips reddening, “I heard bears are symbols of strength, courage, and healing.”

“Aw, Our brat is growing up so well!” Mitsuki cooed, promptly, throwing an arm around her husband as the flustered man sputtered in agreement.

Shota patted the blond’s head, “Thank you.” he said, fondness abundant in his tone.

Shortly after, they left the room with promises of visiting soon, Shota slumped on his designated seat, chugging down his cold coffee in one gulp. “Do you see how many people are waiting for you?” he asked her, watching for movement on her pale face.

Upon no answer, he crushed the cup and tossed it into the bin.

5th October, 3101

[Day Three]

A warmth that stuck no matter the angle, a fluid so soothing that slumber was the only alternative, darkness which wasn’t inherently scary, just knowing, *freeing* . Motions that sometimes sloshed her to a barricade, giving glimpses of minor hardship, but that was it. That

was the *only* hardship. It wasn't an endless sea of cordiality or vagueness, it stuck, it swaddled her in a hug, she was cognizant, but this... this was different.

Warmth didn't stick like a second skin, breeze tickled her occasionally, and whispers sounded with lethargy, nonetheless, it still lulled her to inertia. This was freeing too, just not compared to the first... *first time she died?*

Pink brows furrowed, but eyes stayed shut.

If this wasn't a womb, then what was this?

*

“—Now remember little listeners, just because your homeroom teacher isn't here, doesn't mean any of you get to slack off! I'm just as strict as Aizawa when I'm serious!” he yelled, clapping his hand in front of him.

“Does that mean you're not normally serious?” Yamamoto quipped, grinning too widely. Their homeroom teacher had been absent for three days now, and he didn't care what the reason was, this put a halt on their regime, finally allowing him a well-deserved break from all the intense hero work he was doing.

Hizashi laughed, “Well, you can't be so intense all the time!”

“But Yamada-sensei,” Hayakawa called, (ever since The Encounter, it had given them some insight on learning their teacher's actual names instead of referring to them by their aliases) “Why hasn't sensei been able to come? He even came to class after, like, what was the incident that got his left arm fractured?”

“You mean that villain attack near Nakameguro?” Takahashi filled in.

“Yes!” Hayakawa nodded, “He got a nasty injury, but he still came to teach us, did he fall into a coma or something?” The orange-haired girl inquired, tilting her head curiously.

“Haha, right, Sho— Aizawa never cuts class, huh?” Hizashi laughed awkwardly.

“Never is an understatement.” Yamamoto snorted.

Fujiwara groaned, “He’s always early too.”

Hizashi scratched behind his neck, contemplating what to give out. “Are you all *really* that worried about your sensei?” He asked instead, eyeing them with a cheery look.

“Of course we are!” Class President Nakamura exclaimed.

“That’s right,” Andou agreed, “He’s strict with teaching us, he doesn’t beat around the bush, he motivates us in his way, and he’s petty as heck, but we’re so much better than we were compared to last semester. If sensei happens to be injured beyond being able to come to class, or if it’s anything else *that* serious, and *if* there’s a chance he might leave U.A., then, of course, we want to know!”

With her words, more students grew in solidarity.

Hizashi grinned, these kids didn’t hate Shota the way his best friend claimed they did. “Alright, alright, I’ll tell you the reason.” Then he sobered, hands clasping on the podium he was standing in front of, regarding the expectant bunch with neutral eyes. “His daughter’s been hospitalized due to some injuries from the latest explosion. It was quite serious, and she’s out of danger now, but Asuka-chan hasn’t regained consciousness so…” Hizashi quirked a brow, why the hell did they look so weird about the news?

“Tenshi-sama got injured?!”

Tenshi?

“Oh Kami, I hope she gains her health soon!”

“Our savior is bedridden and we didn’t even know?!”

“Yamada-sensei, I would like to send flowers, please pass on the room number!”

“Poor sensei, he must be so heartbroken! No wonder he ditched school, it was for Tenshi-sama!”

“Okay, guys! Everyone who wants to send gifts—”

Hizashi stared at the commotion with keen confusion. *Tenshi-sama? Savior? Did Shota ever mention something about his class meeting Asuka?*

Eventually, he ended up hauling all the gifts from the students to the hospital because he wasn't comfortable giving out the room number so freely.

*

Shota scrunched his nose. There were so many bouquets occupying the hospital room that the lingering sweetness affected his frontal lobe. It wasn't only that, the whole coffee table was occupied with baskets of fruits, a plethora of cookie cans, and packets of sweets, there was also a makeshift box he made to fill in all the cards she received from the neighborhood kids, her classmates, and *his students* . There were also coupons to Amai's bakery, fuzzy socks, and books that came from her 'supplier'.

Balloons hung from her bed railing, her raven hair adorned with a messy braid and pretty clip, a work from Sana-chan, her best friend from school. He didn't get to sulk around like he opted to because of how many *friends* this kid had— and kami that was a good thing but he could *not*, for the life of him, make small talk— an alarming amount of people from their neighborhood (he even wondered how the hell she befriended people from the Hagane warehouse who were notoriously rumored to be involved with the Tsutsuiji, a bunch of known and widely recognized loan sharks that ran Suji&co).

Some of his colleagues from work, Sansa and Naomasa from the police station, Big-headed Benjiro who was bashful while handing him a bouquet of chrysanthemums— the point was, there were so many people dropping by that his social battery glitched on the last block by the time it was sundown.

'Knock, knock'

Shota almost swore, reluctant to address whoever the hell was at the door.

The door slid open, and he scowled.

"You don't have to look so disappointed." Aizawa Kazue said, her grip on her handbag tightening.

He swore under his breath, "I'm not in the mood, *Kaa-san*. "

“What, I can’t come to visit my sick granddaughter?” she threw back haughtily. Extremely confident for someone he had seen worming around people to escape from him.

“In case you haven’t noticed,” he started, throwing his thumb back at Asuka’s motionless figure, “your granddaughter is unconscious and cannot be *bribed* by anmitsu cups.”

“I’ve been visiting since the first day she was hospitalized.” she countered, closing the door behind her, “I figured you’d be in a foul mood during the first few days, and there were plenty of visitors pouring in so I didn’t want to intrude.”

Covering a short distance, she sat herself on the sofa, placing her glossy bag next to her lap. “I said I wanted to change and I mean it.”

“A bit too late for that.”

Blue eyes flashed with hurt, prickling his conscience, but he refused to give in, “I didn’t want to say anything in front of Asuka, but I’ll say this now; you may have supported me financially, but that was it. From the time I’ve been mature enough to form memories, there’s not a *single* one I can say I cherish relating to you.”

A fire lit his chest and burned his throat, “I was hopeful that you’d turn around and get *better*, that you’d stop seeing Tou-san in my place, and be fucking adult enough to separate your issues with your dead husband and your *son*, that you’d see that I was *trying* to be the best that I could even when I didn’t have a clear head on *why* you’d treated me the way you did.” his grip on the arms of his chair grew taut, eyes glazing unwittingly.

Kazue grew teary-eyed, “I-I’m sorry, I truly am.”

“*Sorry* doesn’t cut it.” he seethed, “Sixteen years of my life— sixteen years of my life I had to deal with the same stifling home, an emotionally stunted mother, and guilt I shouldn’t *have to* bear. Was it my fault that he died? Is being financially burdened any reason to abuse your child?! Why must I forgive you just because you *happened* to feel bad for the wrongdoings you’ve committed?” his chest heaved, standing up from the chair and staring down at her form.

“Asuka is not your fucking leeway, stop using her.” he turned away from her, facing his daughter as his hands wrapped around the bed railing.

He heard her sigh heavily. "I know you hate me." she said shakily, "And I'm not asking you to forget those years of pain I've caused you, I'm a terrible parent, *I know that.* "

Heels clacked behind him, nearing closer and closer until they passed him to the other side of the bed. Shota refused to look at her.

"That day...the first time I saw Asuka-chan, I was going to apologize for missing your graduation."

Yes and that went very well, didn't it?

"But it spiraled out of control when you talked back to me for the first time, I didn't think... I didn't think my obedient son was capable of doing that. And the fact that you said you didn't have the best Okaa-san growing up, hit me a bit too hard even when I knew it was true."

The machine beside him beeped at short intervals, and his eyes traced the clip connected to her small finger, on the same hand, a needle pierced her skin, supporting light bruises that managed to jolt his heart every time they came to change the dressing.

"I regretted leaving like that, I *really* did, but I also knew that I messed up to the point where you were willing to cut connections with me forever." The blues of the hospital garbs seemed neon under the dimming light, barely letting his sight outline her features. He did that a lot these days. Staring at her tranquil face that was free of worldly matters.

"So I kept up with your daily lives."

He looked up this time, frowning.

"Catching glimpses of you and Asuka-chan, the way you indulged her, the way your face changed while being with her, the way you'd scrunch your face whenever she'd run into a pole."

Kazue laughed despite the discontent on her son's face, the type of laugh no one joined in because it was smothered in infelicity. "I wanted to come out and apologize, but then I'd remember your hateful eyes and, well...." she sighed, "You were content, Shota, you didn't need me in your life anymore, like you said, I fulfilled your monetary needs and that was it."

"You stalked me?" he grunted, heart-stirring with an emotion he wanted to toss out the window.

She looked away from him, focusing on the white sheets of the bed, “I did.” she agreed, “I stalked my son and granddaughter because I was too much of a coward to face you both.”

The cool air buzzed from the ac, colluding with the incessant ringing of the ECG machine beside him, filling in an odd silence.

She's sorry, Shota, your mother is sorry , she's genuinely sorry, and had been for the past eight years, it's not sporadic; she realized how she treated you — she doesn't hate you anymore—

No. No. He was not going through the line of thoughts. He wasn't.

“I finally mustered up the courage to approach her when she was three.” She pervaded the silence, a sort of nostalgic smile tugging her red-painted lips, “She was an odd child, her remarks were witty but her eyes were similar to yours; filled with dislike for me.” Ice blue met ash grey once more, bizarrely containing sentiment he was foreign with.

“I was more motivated after that, and as you said, *bribed* her with sweets to get a short conversation. Her retorts were more scathing than anything, not sparing me more than ten minutes, but I was happy.”

Shota had masses on his tongue. Masses and masses before she started talking about Asuka.

“Then one day,” she continued, shifting on her feet, “she said something that made me confront you.”

She took a deep breath, relaying words that have him pause momentarily.

His daughter thought he was a soft person. A kind person. His heart warmed, but his brain highlighted the part where she had mentioned speaking of Watanabe Takeru.

“I didn’t bait her.” she said firmly, “I know you think I’m some manipulative monster, and I *was* , I admit, but I’ve changed now. I only brought Her up because I thought Asuka-chan might be curious—she’s mature for her age, Shota, I speculated she hadn’t heard of her Kaa-san. But it was the wrong thing to do, I admit that.”

“I don’t expect a matter of years to be dissolved in mere days or months.” she expressed wanly, “It’s going to take time, I know,

regardless of that, I'm going to put in a *butt load of effort*, as Asuka-chan said." A ghost smile etched on her face, "I can't take back what I did, and the words I've said are horrendous, but I'll improve. I'll try my best."

Shota didn't like the face his mother was making. It wasn't cold, her ice shards were melted. Her face wasn't rigid, but softened in a way Inko would habitually regard Izuku. Her taut lips wobbled instead of staying in the thin line he remembered it to be, despondency and moroseness replacing rigidity and aloofness.

Shota's jaws clenched. "I need time."

The dam broke. "*K-kami-* really?" she sobbed, shaking hands and wiping at her cheeks.

He averted his eyes, "Yes."

A soft person with a gentle heart? Dislike for her showing plenty of feelings? — his dominant hand slipped to Asuka's needle-ridden hand, squeezing it lightly. "I also need space," he said, interrupting his sniffing mother. "You can't just frequent me and hope that I'll give in."

She nodded too enthusiastically for his liking.

After that, he served her coffee like he did to every visitor and sat near Asuka while she sipped it down.

"I'll be leaving then," she said, standing up and pressing over her knee-length skirt, light blue eyes glowing in a way he hadn't ever witnessed before.

'Knock, knock'

Both son and mother diverted their attention to the sliding door, Shota blinking at the suited women and Kazue observed them, recognition smearing over her face immediately.

"Oh, Aizawa-san, what are you doing here?" a woman's voice resounded, her maroon hair so tensely packed in a bun that Shota felt his scalp hurt.

"Kimura. Maruyama." his mother acknowledged them, slightly surprising him.

“You know them?” he questioned, quirking a brow.

“Work colleagues.” she said, then veered her attention to both of them, “You must be here for SC563.”

....*the what now?*

“Yes, Director!” the other woman saluted zealously, her orange skin flaring into a neon.

His mother chuckled, “At ease, Maruyama, you don’t have to do that every time you see me.”

“It is a great honor for me!”

Shota blinked, something niggling at the back of his mind.

“Ah, Aizawa Shota-san,” the Kimura woman addressed, “we’re first-rank officers in charge of case SC563, you should have received a text message about our arrival. I’m Kimura Azusa, this is my partner Maruyama Eiko.”

...*the Hero Commission?* — his mother worked for the fucking hero commission?!

“Yes.” he said, “Of course.”

Great, more association with babbling humans.

“Then I’ll be leaving now, Shota,” Kazue said, patting his shoulder lightly, “I’ll visit soon.”

He nodded curtly.

8th October, 3101

[Day six]

There was a fizz in the air. The sort of fizz one would witness from popping cans of beer, froth overtaking, then depleting with droplets escaping the glass. It was also the kind of fizz that bubbled warmth in her skin, not exactly searing, but enough to pull away like grazing a simmering pot of curry. This was not snugness, nor was it where she had thought she was. This was not the womb.

But was she even dead?

She wasn't sure. Her consciousness flew in and out like unrelenting winds, this was one of the few times it flew in.

"Oh, her color's changing, I guess she'll regain consciousness soon."

"Maa, I don't know why you brought me here again, they're on *that* side for a reason."

"Tch. Leave if you want, I didn't drag you here, you old fart!"

"I should just take a boat to the Waterfall, why do I even deal with brats like you?"

"Baa-chan already passed the Waterfall, why're you still sulking around here?"

"I could ask you the same thing."

In frenzied motion, eyes moved beneath the lids, heart thrumming raucously, almost deafening her from the voices— *She knew those voices!*

"I don't want to leave yet, isn't that simple enough?"

Fingers twitched with resolution, lids fluttering open, only to smack shut once more from the sheer vibrance of her surrounding.

"Fine, I" ll leave— and you know what, maybe I *will* cross the Waterfall."

"Hey! Don't do it without telling anyone! If you pull a Yamoto then I'll choke you to death!"

"Ha! Good luck with that ya twerp, but you'd have to cross to do that!"

Periwinkles and mint, lilac with shades of pearls, light pinks colluding tinctures of seafoam, the sight before she shimmered with such intensity, allowing her to forget why she was flailing to wake up in the first place.

"Oh! Are you awake? Hey there! Yes you, soul with a flowy blue dress, can you hear me? I can see you blinking, are you ignoring me? I'm talking to y-you..you.."

Her head turned to the side to address the voice, nearly losing it when she realized she was lying in the *air*. But she wasn't actively plunging into the endless splashes of pale chroma around her.

"I-Is that you, Sakura-chan?"

She didn't know whether to laugh or cry, "Do I look different?" she asked instead, eyes choosing the latter option, vision blurring him and the vivid green filling behind him.

His whiskered face lit up, grinning so widely, so preciously, "Not at all!"

She ambled over to where he was, warmth blooming in her chest, thrashing her limbs to maintain balance, then collided into a wall she couldn't discern with her eyes. "What the hell—"

"That's the Veil." Naruto supplied, splaying his hand on the said Veil. "It means you're not ready to cross yet."

Her dominant hand rubbed at her eyes, "What do you mean? Why're you on that side then?"

"I died, remember? Fourth Shinobi War, bijuu stealing, infinite Tsukiyomi, ring any bells?" His expression was bright, but there was a discernible tautness in his tone that made her somber.

"How can I forget?" she countered, pressing her hand to match his much bigger ones, only to immediately notice how they were much *bigger* than she remembered. "Wait, what do I look like right now?!"

His brows furrowed, "You look like you..?..."

Her hand went to her hair, tugging it out of the bun it was in, letting the hair flow to its entirety— pink. It was pink. "Naruto, this is *pink* . My hair is pink!"

He tilted his head, "Yes Sakura-chan, your hair has always been pink, am I supposed to point something out?"

"But...but it's supposed to be black.." she murmured, tugging at her rosy locks.

"Enough about that!" Naruto hollered as if she were miles away from him. "Just where the hell have you been?! I remember dying *much* earlier than you, but you weren't here when we came, and now you're

on the other side of the Veil, so that must mean you crossed the Waterfall, but how'd you cross it without anyone knowing? There's only one entrance, y'know, did you find a different entrance or something?—"

"Stop!" she demanded, frowning, "What the hell are you going on about? Veil? Waterfall? Crossing?!"

Naruto tilted to a side, his folded leg brushing the lush green grass, "Right," he laughed sheepishly, scratching behind his neck, "some people have memory lag, forgot 'bout that. So the *Veil* is what separates us, on my side," he pointed to a field of rich green hills, stretching extensively where her eyes couldn't follow, "it's where the dead souls reside— well not *dead*, dead, but like the ones who have *died* but haven't decided on crossing the Waterfall, which is typically the next ticket to getting a new body. So like *rebirth* . You followin' me, Sakura-chan?"

She nodded slowly.

"And on your side, it's like a place where the souls who've been detached from their bodies for various reasons linger around, mostly medical related, from what they've told me."

"Who's they?" she queried, wiggling her toes from the way she hung in the air.

"The souls." he deadpanned, "I come here to chat with them sometimes, they're not always awake because of technical stuff. It's like how you've also been floating for like," he hung his fist in front of his face, raising each finger as he focused intensely. "Six? Or seven days? I don't know, time works differently over here, but I've been coming here pretty frequently because you seemed familiar— and you were! I thought you might've been another pink-haired woman, but you were *you* , Sakura-chan — I should get the others and tell them you've been found!" contingent to his claim, he didn't stand up to call others, "But shame on you Sakura-chan, how could you just pull a Yamoto? We were supposed to reunite here, y'know? Even that teme was nice enough to wait for six years before passing the Waterfall."

But she didn't do any of the things Naruto mentioned..?

"The others...?.." she asked instead, hope twinning her heart and crawling her throat, "others like...like Shikamaru?"

His smile withered, "No," he said, picking at the hem of his orange

jacket, “Shikamura...he crossed nine years after reaching here.”

The twinning squeezed her heart and clogged her throat, “So he’s not here.” she said, a tight-lipped smile overtaking her face.

Naruto was quick to recover, “It isn’t what you think,” he said, “Shikamaru waited for a *long* time, he waited for a really, really long time, but you never came, and... and at first everyone assumed you got caught up in the Tsukuyomi, but then about five years into coming to *Midori no niwa* , more and more people staring pouring in after breaking from the ‘*supposedly*’ eternal genjutsu. This meant you should’ve been one of the first to break through since you’re good at stuff like that, but you never did.”

He put his hand on the veil, then his forehead, “Baa-chan suggested that maybe you already crossed the Waterfall without us knowing” a wry smile tugged his lip, “and we believed it ‘cos that’s better than acceptin’ that you were still stuck in that genjutsu.”

She let her forehead connect to where he was. “I’m sorry for being late.”

His shoulders shook. “You should be!”

After he settled himself, Naruto declared that they didn't have much time to catch up, and before she asked what that meant, he initiated to yap about, well, *everything*.

He prattled about reuniting with his parents with the purest grin, boasted about Sasuke having to get a ‘redemption record’ before he could enjoy the full benefits of *Midori no niwa* , then also followed it by saying how the ‘emotionally stunted bastard’ *cried* when he got to reunite with his family and clan. He explained how Hinata confessed to him, ensuingly getting assaulted by Neji’s shoe. Naruto, with a beaming face and twinkling eyes that pounded nostalgia into her, chatted about living the best life with his parents and remaining friends that hadn't decided to cross the Waterfall yet .

“Lots of people have crossed, y’know?” Naruto chimed, “Tsunade-baa, Sasuke-teme, Ino, Shikamaru, Sai, Yamato— speaking of which, who knew Taichou was so intent on gettin’ a new body that he left right after a few hours into reaching here? But Kakashi says he probably lost his footing and fell into the Waterfall which is *bullshit* because you can’t just *fall over* .” he huffed, adjusting one of his legs to the side while the other stayed tucked under him.

“What about you, Sakura-chan? Why’re you floating there?”

She blinked, “I got into an accident.”

“Hmm,” he stroked a non-existent beard, “so you probably fell into a coma.”

“I’ve been meaning to ask this.” she said quirkling a brow, “Are you allowed to share such information with ‘souls’ who haven’t died yet?”

He waved his hand dismissively, “It won’t matter, you won’t remember anything when you wake up.”

“What?”

“It’s true,” he bobbed his head, “I’ve talked to the same souls twice and they don’t recall the conversation we had before. Plus there’s no one that stops me from doing this so I’m assuming this isn’t illegal or anything.”

“So I’m going to forget *everything* ?!” she squawked, beyond hysterical as her fist landed on the damnable Veil.

“Woah, calm down Sakura-chan.” he held up his hands despite knowing she couldn’t cross. “Don’t you have to return here when you die anyways? And there’s no *need* to retain such memories, starting your life on a clean slate is the *purpose* of rebirth,” He grinned brightly, “I don’t think anyone wants to remember their past lives when it’s just going to burden them anyways.”

Her lips wobbled— *she remembered everything dammit! She remembered her past, she remembered her present, and she wanted to remember this too! This memory of Naruto, his narratives of all their friends, this was fucking important!* — “But I do remember—”

“Oh!” he exclaimed, eyes lighting up, “Your transparency is dissolving!”

She halted, “What?”

Then it started to fizz.

“It means you’re ready to go back!” he provided, heaving himself off the grass, and jumping excitedly, “This is awesome, Sakura-chan, you can finally go back!”

“Wait, wait, I still need to tell you— shit, what the fuck is this?!”

“Don’t worry!” he beamed, “We’ll meet again someday! Be happy until then— not that you’re going to remember any of this— but still! Live your life to the fullest! I’ll be sure to tell everyone I saw you—” the rest of it was just buzzing to her ears as the heat closed in, creeping over her hand, crawling between her toes, and slithering up her ankles.

It enclosed her, dimming the captivating landscapes and tantalizing colors, making her fists tighten around the clothes she was wearing, and with a final seethe that blocked her perception, her throat ambled out a large bout of air.

*

A smaller hand perched on a shock of charcoal hair, smoothing over as he shifted below. It took no effort to subdue him as she sent a weave of chakra to soothe his nerves, procuring an unintelligible mumble to fill the muted room.

Maybe it was the overwhelming warmth cuddling in her chest for the number of people that were beaming to see her awake, or maybe it was the mountain of sweets that she helped herself to without her father intervening on how she was going to get diabetes. It might be the remaining toll of being in a coma for six days and the variety of tests conducted to get an understanding of her byakugou seal. Or it might’ve been that itching feeling behind her head that she was forgetting something important, but couldn’t for the life of her get a firm grasp on *what* it was.

Or it might be the unpleasant sings left on her heart after seeing her father cry so openly for the first in her life.

Either way, she couldn't catch a wink of sleep.

“OJI-SAN, TIME BOMB'S AWAKE!”

“ASUKA-CHAN!!”

Two blurs attacked Asuka, pinning her back to the bed after she had managed to painstakingly get her body to sit up.

“Damn you! How can you just sleep for six days straight?!” Katsuki grumbled, his fist tightened behind her hospital gown.

“I’m so g-glad you’re awake!” Izuku sobbed, nuzzling his head into the crook of her neck, warm tears lingering on her skin.

She lay dumbstruck, too many things swirling in her head at once.

Shortly after, Izuku and Katsuki were pulled away from her and a familiar mess of raven hair entered her vision.

“Papa,” she mumbled, newfound energy compelling her to sit up again, “you’re alive.” thank kami he was—

Then it was too fast to see because he was gathering her in his arm, the hug tightening till half her face was pressed against his chest, his heartbeat resonating loud enough to make her disoriented head vibrate. Before she could reciprocate, a hoarse voice rumbled, “ I-I’m sorry I couldn’t protect you.” and then he shook. He shook like the day after her quirk manifested, harrowing sobs perforating her ears.

Except this wasn’t warm-hearted.

It left a need to itch out the awful thing stuck in her throat and weaving down her chest, swirling and pounding her organs in a spiteful manner, and it kept getting worse as he repeatedly apologized—

It got worse when he receded from the hug and she got a glimpse of his fatigued face. Red, red eyes which hadn’t ever been that red since she was old enough to replace his eye tonic, eye bags that held the weight of the world, and paleness that was precarious— this was wrong, so, so, so fucking wrong— before she could open her dry mouth and tell him something, anything, streams of people entered the room, shutting her out of his reach.

She leaned against the pillow, her eyes following outside the window which displayed the view of the night sky.

This had gotten too out of hand.

It was one thing to make up lies due to her dissociative episodes, but this? Where she snuck into a burning building to save his life and ended up getting fucked over five times before almost dying and activating her byakugou seal with who-knows-what type of miracle? What kind of bullshit lie could she make up to nullify her entry into the building despite her father’s warning to stay in the car? This was

all too outrageous.

She had gotten too far this time. And all because of some stupid piece of steel, preventing her from making a safe retreat.

Her father wasn't an idiot, and judging by how he reacted to her, sobbing about how he *failed* to protect her, she was well aware that he was feeling culpable for *her* mistakes. It made her eyes prickle when he appeared so desolate, so excruciatingly distressed, all because his hard-headed daughter achieved to save his life nearly at the expense of hers.

It didn't sit right with her. Nothing about this did, he wasn't interrogating her, and he wasn't questioning the logistics of what the fuck happened, and *how* it happened. He wasn't admonishing her nor was he demanding answers to questions she knew she'd have a hard time explaining— he did *nothing*. Said nothing. Her father just listened to her, fed her what she wanted, gave her whatever she asked for, and observed her with eyes that made her divert her gaze from him.

He knew. Asuka knew he knew. He knew she came to save him, he knew she wasn't a figment of his imagination, yet he wasn't saying anything about it— *why wasn't he saying anything about it?!*

Guilt.

It isn't his fault! She's okay now!

Realizing you were on the brink of death.

But —

The hopelessness of seeing a loved one fight for their life.

That is —

It's the same, isn't it? It's how your friends died knowing you couldn't do anything. And then your father had to see the same sight, feel the same wretched emotions, experience the agonizing

SHUT UP!

Her chest heaved and her eyes shut, shaking her head to regain control. Her father shifted under her hand once more, grumbling, movement apparent under his lids. She smoothed over his hair,

calming him in the process. "I'm sorry," she whispered. " *I'm* the one who should be sorry, Papa."

When her eyes averted from his pale face and stared back outside at the night sky, the beaming moon mingling with soft gray clouds, something clicked in her mind.

Choices.

She chose the craziest one.

*

Chapter End Notes

Ahaha, this was such a long chapter. Ik Shota might be a little oc, but come on the dude is losing it.

I feel bad for doing this Naomasa but it izz what it iz ㄟ(͜ʖ)ㄟ

Fun fact: even if Sakura isn't a sensor type in the canon, because she had vv immaculate chakra control, she's able to do cool stuff like scan areas for hidden traps, discover hidden rooms, and locate people (obvi). Apparently this happens in Sasuke Retsuden (a light novel) when both husband and wife go on a mission to find a cure for Naruto's chakra illness. (I should've included this in the last chapter > <)

Alsooo, Hizashi's eye color is red in the manga, so it's red here ;))

And I DO read all the comments even if I don't reply to all of them, sometimes I even reread them to boost some writing energy cos it's vv encouraging y'know?♡♡♡

Finally and most importantly, thank you so much for the support you've shown for this fic, like I almost cried- 900+ kudos? Not to mention the rising hits T T. A bazillion thanks for constantly brightening my days!

If any of you want to reach out to me here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)

List of OC's:

Dr Ume- diagnosis specialist

Dr Ito- surgeon
Dr Sanami- quirk specialist
Miyamura- nurse
Sana- school bff
Aizawa Kazue- Shota's mom
Hayakawa- student
Yamamoto- student
Nakamura- student
Fujiwara- student
Takahashi- student
Andou- student
Kimura Azusa- officer at hero commission
Maruyama Eiko- officer at hero commission

Only 17

Chapter Summary

Past. Present. Future.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by: Grig9700

This is a much anticipated chapter that all of you have been waiting for ;)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

9th October 3101

“Did this happen?”

“Of course, I got the news from someone present in the surgery room. There’s no doubt about it.”

A grin overtook the mutilated face, “Aizawa Asuka, huh?”

“I’ve compiled a whole dossier on her.” he handed it to his leader.

Thick fingers wrapped around the beige file, flipping it open as he scanned it with his quirk.

Full name: Aizawa Asuka

Date of birth: 29th January, 3093

Height: 137.6 cm

Weight: 25.8 Kg

Hair color: Black

Eye color: Green

Blood type: B (+)

Birthplace: Japan, Hosu City. Hosu life care hospital.

Quirk:

1. Erasure. Age 4.
2. Cure-all. Age 8.

Parents:

Father: Aizawa Shota

Quirk: Erasure. Age 4.

Occupation:

1. Underground hero: Eraserhead
2. Teacher at U.A.

Mother: Watanabe Takeru

Quirk: Voluntary Invisibility. Age 4.

Occupation :

1. None. [Currently in prison]

Schoolin —

The file shut.

“Have Kurogiri monitor her,” he said, tossing the file to the side. “As soon as things settle, have him bring her here.” A sinister smile spread on his face, “I absolutely *must* have this quirk.”

The mustache man nodded, his hands clasping together, “What about her Otou-san? He also shares the same quirk as her, would it not be advantageous to have them both?”

A subtle hiss echoed along with the breath he took, “Not necessary. The child has both quirks I desire.”

“As you wish, Sensei.”

Shota had sensed a change in Asuka after he woke up. And by that, he meant waking up after the first decent slumber he had in *days*.

She was reserved for some reason. Not at all like the day before when she was smiling at everyone, conveying thank you's, stuffing her face with sweets, and avoiding his gaze— yeah, that part was odd, but he supposed it was given considering she knew what she had done. But it wasn't like he could bring himself to pour out all the questions he had for either. It just...*it just wouldn't slip out*. He was just thankful that she was awake and no longer pale, just glad that her eyes sparkled at the breakfast Kayama brought this morning, elated that she was moving, responding, *blinking*.

“ — Now, moving on to a very important bit.” Kimura Azusa with the scalp prickling hair style remarked, “Do you realize that what you did was extremely wrong, Asuka-chan?”

His eyebrows twitched. Even he hadn't brought it up, who the fuck were they to remind her of such a traumatic event?! (he was against this in the first place, but Asuka insisted it was *fine* , insisted that she wanted to get the ‘formalities’ over with) *Before he could retaliate, Asuka spoke.*

“I know,” she said, blinking blankly as if someone said the sky was blue.

Azusa shifted in her seat, handing her file to her partner who Shota assumed just had a natural poker face because there was no way she was actually regarding a child with such a wooden look.

“Then may I know what led you to do such a thing.” Azusa prodded gently.

Asuka scratched the hand a needle was previously embedded in, “I was worried, all the other heroes kept going in and out of the Mall during random intervals. Manual, Kore, Gyro, I saw all these heroes attend to people, and talk to the detective Oji-sans at some point, but even when he was one of the first heroes to go in, he never once came out.”

She started scratching more furiously, and he intervened, putting a hand

over her smaller one. Then her head turned to him, and the wobbly smile she gave made his heart squeeze. "The third explosion went off." she continued, facing Azusa once more, "And I know I should've asked someone for help, but I wasn't in the right mind. Papa is the only family I have, so I'm not sorry to say that if another similar situation arises, I would willingly do it again."

Shota opened his mouth to reprimand her, but nothing slipped out. It stuck at his throat and grated his words into bits, making his fist clench from how numb it was growing. What she said was equally horrifying and heart-warming, the former at least five times more prominent.

Azusa blinked in surprise, collecting herself soon enough, "How did you make it past so many professionals?"

His daughter shrugged, her wavy black hair slipping from her shoulders to her back, "I don't know, all I knew was that Papa was taken to the highest floor through the escalator, and I couldn't take the same path, so I used the north exit."

"The north exit had professionals surrounding the area too." Poker face spoke. Shota had the urge to kick her stool for the serrated tone she used on Asuka. Wasn't she sputtering like some idiot when his mother was here?

"Are you usually this rude to kids?" he snapped, glaring.

"Your kid broke very important rules." she retaliated, regarding him with cool eyes.

"Maruyama." Azusa said, looking over to her partner, "Wait outside until I'm done."

Orange skin flared, but she listened nonetheless, handing over the file to Azusa once more as she stomped out of the room.

"I'm sorry about that." Azusa said, the door firmly shutting behind them, "Maruyama doesn't take kindly to rule breakers," her softened eyes regarded Asuka, "even if they are kids."

"I don't care." Shota retorted, "If she's a first-class officer of whatever the hell she's supposed to be, then she should know how to do her job right."

Azusa looked hesitant.

"Papa," he felt the hand under his hand move above, patting it lightly, "I'm fine, don't get so angry."

His mood dissipated.

“Right, can I get back to my questions?” Azusa asked, smiling.

Asuka nodded.

“How did you make it through the north exit?”

She shrugged, making her raven hair bounce again, “It’s a bit fuzzy, but I’m pretty athletic so I remember running a lot. I mean no one tried to stop me, so I just kept going till I knew I reached the fourth floor.”

Shota remembered the burns marring her hands.

“I see.” the woman nodded, “Then where did you find your Otou-san?”

“West food court,” she answered simply.

Azusa’s eyes widened for a split second, and Shota’s heart skipped a beat. To cover such a distance...

“He was struggling to breathe, so I put a scarf around his neck,” she resumed, “Then I didn’t see anyone near the area so I just carried him till I saw some people —”

“Carried?” Azusa questioned, clearly mind-boggled. “You carried a man over 70 Kilos, Asuka-chan, is that what you’re telling me? Or is this another quirk that manifested due to high stress —”

“I’ve always been strong.” Asuka intervened, waving her hand dismissively.

Shota’s memory played another scene where a woman in her late twenties was carrying him, pronouncing bullshit words of assurance and evasion while having his daughter’s voice.

“Papa, tell Kimura-san how strong I am.” his thought came to an abrupt halt.

He blinked, questions upon question piling inside his head, “Asuka has always been strong.” he parroted.

Azusa’s brows furrowed, “Have you considered that to be a quirk? It’s not normal for eight year old’s to carry twenty-seven year old’s without the usage of a quirk.”

Another shrug, “I don’t know. Are the questions done? Can I go home

now?"

"We're almost nearing the end, just a few more things and you'll be on your way home." Azusa coaxed.

His daughter was visibly annoyed.

"Now I understand that you love your Otou-san very much," she started, "but what you did was immensely dangerous and you should not, under any circumstance, ever attempt something like that again, got it?"

Asuka didn't nod, nor did she gesture any form of agreement to the statement, so Shota gently nudged her with his elbows which got her to mumble something neither of the adults in the room could decipher.

Nevertheless, the woman with the taut hair spoke, her firm expression unwavering. "Firefighters, police, detectives, medics, heroes, they are all there for a reason. You must put trust in the people working for your wellbeing, Asuka-chan, I'm sure you could have asked anyone working in the scene about your Otou-san and they would not have any problem assisting you with your troubles." she continued, "What you did instead would have crippled you for the rest of your life if you had survived the surgery."

Shota's brow twitched.

"Fortunately, you were blessed with such a quirk at such a crucial time," Azusa concluded.

"Alright." Asuka agreed, slightly surprising him, "Now is this over? Will you be coming to bother — visit me anytime soon?"

Prickly scalp thought otherwise.

"I have one more proposal for you," Azusa said, lips contoured to a smile. "Seeing your brave, unwavering spirit for the wellbeing of your family —"

Shota knew where this was headed. And he didn't like it.

"—Have you considered being a hero, Asuka-chan? It's wonderful to have such tenacity, during controlled circumstances, I mean, please don't —"

Maybe it was the dislike attached to the hero commission after Asuka's bizarre theory of them poaching kids away from their families to mold them into 'exemplary heroes', whatever the cause, this rubbed him the wrong way. The kid had just woken up from a six-day coma and he didn't

want anyone feeding her bullshit hero crap so that she could change her dreams and plunge herself into a career that was sure to cost her life.

“Kimura-san,” Asuka interrupted, kicking him out of his head again. “I want to go home, can we please wrap this up?”

“Asuka’s emotionally fragile right now.” he said, steel present in his eyes, “I wasn’t comfortable with this in the first place, but my daughter insisted that she wanted to get this done with.” he stood from his sleeping chair from the last seven days, “She’s professed what she did was wrong, straightened the knots everyone was confused over, and now I’ll be taking her home, so please excuse us, this room needs to be emptied in two hours as I’ve already filled out the discharge form half an hour ago.” he dipped his head shortly, Asuka followed suit, and Kimura Azusa was gone with a reluctant face.

They took a taxi home. And Hizashi had insisted that he would’ve been there to help if he didn’t have a shift, and Kayama informed that she left food Hizashi had made at their house before she went to work. Though even in the taxi she was quiet, somber, *withdrawn* — *just what was she thinking about?*

He slid a hand across her shoulders and brought her near to him, she fit into his side like a piece of puzzle, *sighing* as she closed her eyes.

When they reached home, she exited first, he grabbed the bags, and both of them ambled over to the oak door in stifling silence. It didn’t hold long. And she was the first one to break it.

“Why aren’t you asking me anything?” she asked, jolting his heart by a few miles.

He dropped the bag on the one-seated sofa.

“You *know* I lied to Kimura-san.” she pushed, green eyes flashing with something he had never seen before.

“I know,” he said instead.

“You saw me carry you to safety.” her fists clenched by her sides, eyes unnervingly solemn.

“I did.” his mouth dried upon agreeing, and more so than the alarming statements she was making, the look in her eyes was so different that he felt chills crawl down his spine.

“Then why aren’t you asking me to clarify anything? You questioned me about the dissociative episodes I had right after my quirk manifested.”

His breathing halted.

“... *What?* ”

“Dissociative episodes.” she repeated, staring up at him, “I lied about that too. I’ve lied about lots of things.”

What the hell was she saying?

Asuka sighed, ambling over to his bewildered form, tugging at his sleeves to make him sit on the two-seater sofa. He complied easily due to his state of mind. “Wait here,” she said, slipping out of the living room and entering the kitchen. Shota stared after her.

She returned with two cans of peach milk and he observed her placid demeanor. *Dissociative episodes. What did that mean? Why did she confirm everything he saw in his ‘dream’? Just what happened throughout one night—*

“I have solid explanations for everything I’ve done,” she started, “but before we start, you *have* to promise me you’re not going to toss me into a loony bin.” A small smile tugged her lip, though he didn’t find her joke very amusing. *Lying? What did she lie about? He knew she was mischievous, but lying? She hadn’t lied to him ever since she was four .*

He turned his body to the side, facing her more clearly, “What do you mean by dissociative episodes?” he asked finally, brows furrowed.

She grabbed one can and popped it open, “That’s too far in the timeline, I have to start from the very beginning.”

“Asuka,” he pressed, agitation welling inside him.

“Alright.” she took a large sip from her can and placed it back on the coffee table, “I’ve had memories of my past life ever since I was a baby.”

His brain glitched.

“We need to make a trip back to the hospital—”

“No, you’ve gotta *listen* , Papa. Wait till I’m done.” She cut him off, managing to look much older than she was. “When I was two months

old I was left at your doorstep after I was abandoned.”

.... *Who told her that? Kayama and Hizashi should've been sensible enough to know not to tell her such things, from where did she —*

“Before that, I was in terrible condition.” she continued, bitterness spreading across her face. “Kaa-san starved me a lot, she cursed at me for being born whenever she had time to spare for me, and most of the time, I'd be swimming in my shit while she did whatever the hell she got up to. As a result, I got diagnosed with pneumonia and suffered malnutrition.”

His heart wrenched. This wasn't normal. “Why do you remember that?” he questioned in clear distress.

“I just told you.” she quipped back, “I have memories ever since I was in her womb. I remember being born, I remember being starved to the point where I thought I was going to die. I remember the day she left me at your doorstep, and I remember you calling ‘Zashi-oji and Kayama-oba right after discovering my existence. I remember how you were going to put me up for adoption. I remember the day you called me a *mistake* and apologized to me for having such underqualified and immature parents. I remember—”

“Stop!” he interrupted, beyond troubled.

Asuka didn't stop. “I can make you believe me in other ways.” she resumed, blinking up at him, “This here.” she pointed at the purple diamond between her collar bones, “It's not a quirk. This is called the *Byakugou seal*, I've been working on it since I was a baby, and it was supposed to appear when I was four, but because I was storing it on my forehead, and was too close to my *actual* quirk, the chakra ended up forcefully redirecting to my eyes; that's the reason why it was so painful when it manifested.” The vines started spreading from the rhombus, emptying the purple to a hollow black diamond as it crawled over her skin and intertwined like vines grappling trees.

“I was planning on hiding it with a simple genjutsu after it appeared, and it was a good method to conceal it from you too because both our quirks negate, which *you* didn't know. I've tested it multiple times whenever you're using it on ‘Zashi-oji—”

“Asuka,” he said, immensely confused, “*do you realize you're making no sense?*”

She sighed, and it was the sort of sigh he would direct at her

whenever she said something ridiculous, "I'll give you some time to take it in, but before that," she leaned near him, stretching her hand and hovering it over his head, then he felt warmth, subsiding the light throbbing he previously had. "I just healed your concussion. Let's talk once more when you're ready."

She slipped off the sofa, the marks receding from her skin as she took her can of peach milk from the coffee table and sauntered into the kitchen.

Shota was left dumbfounded, processing everything she had pounded him with over five minutes.

*

I have memories ever since I was in her womb. I remember being born.

That was not rationally possible.

I remember being starved to the point where I thought I was going to die. I remember the day she left me at your doorstep.

Was it a practical conclusion that Asuka's *mother* traumatized her to the point where his daughter recalled being— *no* , then why did she bring up the matter of being left at his doorstep? That was a piece of information that was well kept from her, and he knew that Hizashi wouldn't let it slip out no matter what because of how protective he was over Asuka. Kayama wouldn't either. Asuka wasn't to ever know that she was abandoned, and he hadn't ever had a talk about what she had just conveyed to him, nor was he planning on to because it was *unnecessary* .

I remember you calling 'zashi-oji and Kayama-oba' right after discovering my existence. I remember how you were going to put me up for adoption.

Again . Knowledge she wasn't supposed to be familiar with. Things that weren't possible to remember *because she was only two months old then* . As far as Asuka should know, *should remember* , she was a child to a single father. And as he had told her at the hospital, her mother was in prison *because she did something bad* . He never specified *what* she did badly .

Starving her, cursed at being born. Swimming in her excretions. Getting diagnosed with pneumonia and suffering malnutrition.

His heart tugged, telling him it wasn't a lie.

His brain told him to be more coherent.

I remember the day you called me a mistake and apologized to me for having you and kaa-san as my parents .

That was a memory between them. In Dagobah beach. *Only* them. And yes he did call her a mistake, and as crude as it was going to sound, she certainly did start as one. A product of one night, an outcome of accumulating his grief to the point where he touched alcohol and got involved with that vile woman. Maybe it was a regret then, a burden even. But now the mere thought of it stung. Asuka was a blessing. An immense one. And his daughter saying something like that to his face was like a punch to the nose.

His head plopped into his open palms, exhaling deeply as his hands slipped from his face to his disheveled hair, fisting them with a frustrated groan.

Past life. A byakugou seal. Dissociative episodes. Memories since she was incubating in her mother — *wasn't it too much? Wasn't what she said straight out of a fairytale?* — but it... it *fits* too. Her behavior, demeanor, and maturity.

It might just be an oddity. Some kids were just weird without a reason. But here she was, giving him outlandish reasons, telling him all these *things* that made his head pound even without the concussion — *the fucking concussion that she just somehow healed?*

“Papa, lunch is ready!”

Letting go of his hair, he peered at the source of the voice. Right, she did say they were going to resume the crazy talk once he was done processing.

He was far from done.

“So, do you believe me now?”

Asuka blinked expectantly, watching how he took the seat opposite to her with a heavily disgruntled face.

“Logically,” he started, pulling out the hair from his face as he tied it to a low ponytail, “I find it hard to believe anything you said. But some of the things you said...” he trailed off, staring at her in a way that made her fidget. “Why now? Why are you telling me all of this now?”

Why indeed. If she had her way, this wouldn't be out in the open. But this secret of hers was hurting people, especially her father who was the type to drown in his guilt instead of swimming back to safety.

She didn't have the heart to lie anymore, not when it was making the both of them so miserable. “Because you've been blaming yourself for what happened to me.” she answered simply, blinking away the prickles affecting her eyes, “And it's unbelievable anyways. Past Life? Sentient to my surroundings ever since I was a *baby*? You're having a hard time believing it too, Papa, why would I willingly tell anyone when I'm just going to sound crazy?”

Steam rose from the heated rice, elevating and disappearing. The silence was interrupted only when both cats snuffed around their lunches from a few meters away from them. “Alright, tell me everything,” he said, picking up his chopsticks.

Her chest lightened. “I'll tell you everything,” she repeated.

It was simply remarkable how the weight sticking to her chest seemed to melt away with every word she spoke.

He didn't interrupt her at any point, only chewing slowly and making distinct faces at her narrative. She gave him a brief overview of Konoha, her easy childhood, admission to the Ninja Academy, genin teams, a short biography on both Naruto and Sasuke, the anticipated turn of events where Sasuke abandon the village, and subsequently the specific events leading to Naruto leaving to train with Jiraiya, and her apprenticeship with Tsunade, a summary of Akatsuki and their less than exceptional goal of world domination, skimmed through the details trailing to the fourth shinobi war, the two months of fighting before the enemies gained a victory, and finally, her death, consequently setting off her mystifying fate of being born into this world.

“...How old were you when you died?” he questioned in a low voice.

She blinked, “Seventeen.”

“ *Seventeen* ,” he repeated, his fingers tightening around his chopsticks.

She scratched behind her neck, fully aware of what he was going to see the next.

“In Konoha, you’re considered a full-fledged adult after you become a genin, I get that it sounds pretty bad, but it was the norm there. Twelve-year-olds, considering you were just a *standard* student and not a deadbeat or a prodigy, graduate from the academy and are slotted into three cell teams with a jounin in charge,” she took a bite out of chicken cutlet, complementing it with a spoonful of rice that emptied her bowl, “then we just do mission exclusive to our ranks and earn our pay, you get the gist.” she shrugged, munching on her food.

[Shota did *not* get the gist.]

“Right, that makes sense.” her father quipped, tone laced with sarcasm.

She smiled.

“That seal,” he fumbled, “why did you start storing it? I thought you said you didn't want to be a hero.”

Asuka snorted, “It’s the *byakugou seal* and yes, I did say I didn't want to be a hero.”

She kept her chopsticks on top of her bowl, leaning against the chair as she hiked up her legs to fold them comfortably. “But I was unfamiliar with this world, and it didn't help that kaa-san was such a menace, so my first thought was to escape from her as soon as I was able to walk, and while I *do* know that she’s far, far away and that I have you to protect me now,” his face smoothed when she said that, making her withhold a laugh, “the Byakugou seal is extremely convenient. And it’s not like I had anything else to do while I was a slobbering baby so I meditated. A lot.”

He rolled his eyes, “If that’s the case then why attempt it even after your quirk manifested?”

She laughed carelessly, “Old habits die hard, you know? Plus, it’s a

legacy left for me by Shishou. With Naruto, as much as he was ostracized for the beast sealed in him, he was exceptional in every way, his personality, his prowess, heck he's even a direct descendant from Uzumaki clan renowned for their specialty of Fuinjutsu, and his Otou-san was the fourth Hokage, so his lineage is more or less, *awesome* ." she wiped at her mouth, absentmindedly brushing off the crumbs from her shirt, "And Sasuke's the same." unbeknownst to her, Shota was busy fitting the puzzles of who was which and what.

"He has the Sharingan. It's an eye technique that does cool things." She clarified, "Adding to that tidbit, he's also from a *clan* , so his natural chakra reserves are like, double of mine? So what I'm trying to say here is," she pressed, darting her eyes at his dumbfounded face, "I was the weak link in the team. Always have been. *Haruno Sakura* was nothing special, no extraordinary lineage, no kekkei genkai, nothing useful for my career as a shinobi except for the chakra control I had."

"That's why the byakugou seal is special to me. Being Shishou's apprentice meant I could *be* something, do something, and all that hard work paid off, you know? I surpassed her teachings, became a great healer, and gained the seal that only two people beside me accomplished, but then not even *one month* into manifesting it, the Infinite Tsukiyomi ruined everything."

Shota blinked, "You mean the tree that puts everyone to sleep?"

Close enough. "Yeah, the infinite Tsukuyomi which puts everyone under an eternal genjutsu."

Shota pushed his bowl to the side, reaching for the jug, and poured himself a glass of water. "But that doesn't make sense. If you're supposed to be caught in this 'genjutsu', then why are you here? It doesn't *sound* eternal."

"Oh, I killed myself before it happened, so I don't exactly know how eternal—"

"You what?!"

She waved her hand dismissively, "Killed myself. It was either that or being stuck in a false reality for as long as I lived, the choice was quite obvious for me."

He proceeded to glare holes into her head.

"I swear I'm not suicidal!"

He tipped his glass and finished the content in one shot. “Debatable.”

“Oh come on!” she protested, did he seriously think she was suicidal? It was an obvious choice, everyone she loved was *dead*, and everyone who wasn't dead was going to get caught by that fucktard genjutsu, wasn't her option justified?

“I’m signing you up for therapy.”

Oh fuck no. “Therapy?!” she shouted, startling the cats behind her, “Do you know how dumb that sounds? Suppose I *do* go to therapy, what am I supposed to say? *Hello, yes, I have memories from my past life where I fought a bloody war, also my tou-san thinks I’m suicidal because I killed myself for the greater good* — tell me how that sounds!”

“Fine.” he drawled, pushing his chair back as he stood up, “But we’re going to need some ground rules.”

She sighed. That was something she could work with.

He started gathering the empty plates, she hopped off the chair to do the same. “First,” he grunted, taking a short trip to the kitchen, dumping all the plates next to the counter. “Tell me about this ‘chakra’ and what it has to do with your quirk.”

He turned around to collect the next heap, but she stayed near the sink, climbing onto the stool specialized for her to clean the dishes. “First thing we need to do is make changes in your quirk registration, Erasure is fine, but seeing how you can change how you look, have enough strength to carry *me*, heal, and more of whatnots, Cure-all isn’t going to cut it. *Especially* since you’ve managed to garner attention to yourself.”

Asuka held in a huff. Stupid Hero Commission, she was right to be wary of them. “In simpler terms,” she answered, turning on the faucet and rinsing the plates with water, “chakra is the basis of all the ‘quirks’. Let’s take ‘zashi-oji for example, remember the day I told you about how the ‘blue’ was densely packed in his throat compared to anywhere else in his body?” he nodded, dumping the last of the plates, then held her arm firmly before sliding the stool aside and replacing her spot. “Yeah, well, it’s like that, the reason why he’s able to do that is *because* of chakra. It amplifies his voice, but it won’t extend anywhere else. But that's how I'm different.”

She watched as he scrubbed the dishes, her dominant hand reaching for the drying cloth hung on the microwave handle, “I’m able to freely

manipulate chakra, so I can do almost everything I did in my previous life; walk on surfaces, heal, scan, perform non-elemental techniques, cast genjutsu, create clones, dabbling with some basic fuinjutsu, having precise chakra control, and *this* ." she tapped the rhombus between her collarbones.

"I don't know half of what you just said." he deadpanned, passing her a bowl dripping with water.

She took it from him, "I'll explain it all in-depth later, but what I'm trying to conclude here is, the foundation of all these techniques that I mentioned is *chakra* , so I'm suggesting we change Cure-all to Energy Manipulation because essentially, chakra is energy, a type of *life form* which is embedded to everything and anything," she finished her explanation, picking up a plate from the washed pile.

He agreed, turning off the faucet, and passing the last ceramic to her waiting hands, "Next thing, I don't want you sprinting off to action whenever you feel like it."

She huffed openly this time.

"I'm serious." he pressed, squeezing the sponge and wiping it around the sink. "The rules in your previous world may have varied, but this one has its own. And one of these rules includes *children* not sneaking into actively oxidizing buildings to—"

"I was serious too." she met his narrowed eyes, "I don't care whether you need a stupid license to save lives, the fact of the matter was that you were *dying* , and nobody was saving you, and I'd be *damned* if I let my family die again!"

Shota's hold on the sponge loosened, his gaze softening at her words

"I know you're beating yourself up over failing to protect me." she said, lowering the drying cloth and placing the bowl on the rack, "I get that I can just say it's not your fault, and you'll still feel guilty because of how I ended up, but you know what, Papa? Maybe it *was* your fault."

He paused, hurt apparent in his eyes.

"I kept waiting and waiting and waiting, and you never came out and — and that explosion went off, and even if I *know* you're not weak and can handle yourself just fine, my gut feeling said something was wrong, and it was!" Her eyes prickled, "Your chakra was dimming, did

you know that?"

He didn't know that.

"When I reached you, your lungs were filled with toxins, and you were dying . If I hadn't reached you in time to flush out the toxins, then... *then* —" her voice muffled, an arm wrapping around her as her mouth met his shoulder.

Tears erupted.

"It's okay," he murmured against her hair, "I'm right here."

Her crying turned up a notch.

12th October 3101

Laughter echoed, loud and ear-grating as Katsuki threw his head onto the pillow and shook his legs with hysteria.

"I don't think I said anything that was this funny?..." Asuka trailed off, tilting her head at him.

Izuku waved his hand dismissively, focusing on making his drawing of Thirteen more elaborate. "It's not that, Kacchan's just happy he got it right."

Asuka rolled her eyes.

"I knew it!" he wheezed, "I fucking knew it!"

She ended up pushing him off the bed.

"What?"

"You heard me. If a license is what's going to get me to legally do this, then I'll do it the right way."

"Asuka, no , " Shota stared at her intensely, "you are going to be a hero just because of this." he watched her wipe at the tears, tears that he hadn't seen since she was old enough to walk. "You made your dreams very clear

to everyone when you were four, I don't want you going back on your words just because of this one incident, this is just...this is just wrong. ”

She sniffed, “That was before this. And I’ve made it clear that I won’t be a bystander when people are in danger. I know what I said, Papa. And I knew that I wanted to take it easy since being a hero was similar to being a ninja. I thought I was done fighting, I thought I wouldn’t have to spare much on such matters anymore, but that isn’t possible anymore.”

“Because I’m weak?” he said, his heart being gripped by something intangible, squeezing and suffocating. His daughter wanted to be a hero because of him. Because he was weak.

She shook her head, “By normal standards, a lot of people would be weak compared to me. I’m a living, breathing cheat character, Papa, why wouldn’t I be?” A sardonic smile tugged at her lips, “But even I’m not invincible.”

“That’s exactly why you shouldn’t be one!” She was stubborn, so stubborn, and so stupidly selfless. Her sense of justice was cogent, her personality was warm like the sun, she wasn’t gullible to many things, and by kami Shota didn’t care whether she had quirks as high as the sky, or experience of a fucking veteran — she was still his eight-year-old daughter at heart, and no amount of bizarreness she showered him with was going to nullify that. “Do you want to end up dead for real?!” he burst, fear gripping him.

“You can’t protect me from everything,” she said, calm despite his frazzled state. “That’s just how it’s going to be, and it isn’t like even if I’m going to be a hero, I’m going to follow you around like some lost puppy. That’s an insult to you. I’m going to be my own person, my own kind of hero .”

His heart didn’t lighten.

“It’s alright. I know you’re uncomfortable with my choice, but you just have to keep watching me.”

That was the hard part.

“I’m also going to need your help.”

Shota sighed.

“My age is a real pain in the butt, so —”

“No way.” he cut in, eyes narrowing, “I’m not handing you off to the hero commission even if you want to willingly go, I’m already reproachful of

you wanting to be a hero."

She frowned, "Who wants to go there? Do you have any idea how creepy that place is? If this was Konoha, then the commission would be the equivalent of The Root."

He blinked, "The what?"

"According to Sai, they had this motto, The unseen ones who support the great tree of Konoha from the depths of the earth , it sounded mysterious and cool, but really it was just a corrupt subsect of the ANBU who operated under this geezer named Danzo, an S-class asshole, by the way." she leaned against the sofa, "They did all sorts of under the hand dealings in the name of bettering Konoha, eradicating the Uchiha clan was one."

"How the hell do you know all that?"

"About Root?" she quipped back.

"No, about the commission ."

She made a face, "Oh, that, Kozume told me."

"Who?"

"My supplier."

Of course, it was her supplier.

"There's a whole story behind how I met Kozume. I'll tell you everything later, but keeping that aside...." She set her emerald eyes on him, firm and determined, "I really wanna age boost, but knowing that's impossible, I thought of another solution; let me skip a few grades."

.....no way was he doing that.

"I brought some snacks for you guys!"

"Thanks, Kaa-chan!"

"Thank you, Inko-oba."

"Thanks, Oba-chan!"

Katsuki still had a shitful grin on his face. "You know, I kind of get it,"

he spoke, stabbing his fork into the chocolate cake, “the incident with landing yourself in the hospital and all must’ve made you rethink your poor career choices, right?”

Her eyebrows twitched.

“Kacchan, we’ve been over this.” Izuku sighed, “No belittling other occupations, remember?”

“Yeah, yeah,” the blond gremlin brushed off, taking a bite of his cake.

“You do realize I can still beat your ass with no problem, right?”

Katsuki tutted, “Always so violent.”

Was this brat acting magnanimous just because she said she wanted to be a hero?

She sipped orange juice, “And you’re *always* so behind, Katsuki.”

“Why’re you guys always headbutting?” Izuku tossed, closing his books to reach for his share of snacks.

“I’m not headbutting,” Katsuki huffed, “Time bomb’s just showing off as usual. Not everyone has gorilla strength y’know? You might be good at fighting and all, but at the end of the day, Izuku and I are the ones who’re gonna be heroes *first*.” he grinned a wide grin, much like how her father grinned whenever he did something crazy.

She smirked, “Whatever floats your paper boat.”

This time, Katsuki’s brows twitched.

18th October 3101

“Well, I guess I forgot to tell you this.”

Shota’s eyes twitched, “Asuka, I don’t care whether you were a student to some *president* of your previous nation, replacing my medicine with your version is unnerving no matter how I look at it.”

Asuka rolled her eyes, pounding the herbs with her granite pestle. “I’ll have you know I’m a full-fledged doctor.”

He watched her grind the herbs with his eyebrows furrowed.

“Don’t worry,” she said, “I’ve been doing this since I was three. The effectiveness of my medicines is guaranteed!” she flashed him a thumbs up.

He stilled briefly, “What?”

“You’ve been saying that a lot in the past few days.” she drawled, “Are you still not desensitized to the fact that you have such an awesome child?”

He glared, “I’ve been reeling from all the information *you* have been dumping on me.”

She shrugged, “You’ll get used to it.”

He slumped on the sofa.

On the ninth of October, she dropped the most lethal bomb.

On the tenth during dinner she told him of Kozume, her ‘supplier’, the CEO of Suji&co who she had inherently saved from a lethal stroke *at the age of fucking three* , so in return, this Kozume thought it was best to make himself her godfather and provide her with everything she could ever need. Hence her store of books, provision of rare herbs, and information regarding what runs around the dark side of Japan. *Why was this kid always involved in things that made his hair gray?* And when he questioned what that had to do with the Hagane warehouse visiting at the hospital, she retorted with a simple:

“They’re not bad people, y’know? Well, at least not to me . The oji-san’s from the warehouse are a division of Suji, so yes, the rumors are true, they’re the ones who carry out the 'terrorizing' part to people who don’t pay back the money on time.”

“That sounds horrifying, and I need to meet with this 'Kozume'.”

She dared to tut at him, “Papa, you think I’m going to let Kozume run such a business while I’m at the helm? They don’t frighten the good, hard-working ones who’re doing something to pay back the money, alright? Plus the interest rate is low, so it works out well most of the time.”

Shota had too much to say.

On the eleventh noon when Asuka was drying the cats from their much-needed shower, she told him about Tora the Galling Cat who managed to run away every time a batch of genin graduated from the academy.

On the twelfth when they ventured off to shopping for Kayama's baby shower once more, she divulged her first C rank mission which occurred outside of her homeland. Then shared about a terrible Snake called somechimaru and how he foiled their 'chunin' exams, subsequently initiating the sequence of her teammate leaving the village. All in all, he saw her punch a tree right after exiting the store, cursing at the sky about how she regretted not being able to throttle him before she died.

He had to haul her over his shoulder and make a grand escape when the tree that bore the brunt of it ominously fell sideways.

On the thirteenth, after finalizing her quirk paperwork, a brief meeting with the Azusa the prickly scalp, and a lunch he had begrudgingly joined with his mother, Asuka had beckoned him to the backyard where the grass needed a severe trimming. Then proceeded to show him all the abilities she had verbally elaborated on.

On the fourteenth, dead in the night minutes after turning three, he had returned home after a patrol, Asuka was stark awake, reading a book on the sofa while the TV murmured indecipherably. That day, they talked about her mental health.

"We've been over this, I'm not going into therapy. Just because I can't sleep one night, doesn't mean I'm staying up every night!"

He looked at her sternly, "This isn't only about sleeping."

"Oh come on!" She groaned, "I haven't had another flashback in years– "

"You were staring off to space a month before this."

Asuka appeared peeved.

"Look," he sighed, "I'm not asking you to go to therapy. I know your troubles would sound ridiculous to anyone who hears them."

She nodded enthusiastically.

"So tell me ." he said, "I know everything. Tell me when you feel overwhelmed, come to me when you have nightmares, use me as a crutch,

alright?"

Asuka blinked, "No offense, Papa, but isn't your mental health shit too? I don't think this will work out very well."

Shota had wanted to cry from rage. The kid had a response to everything he had to say, and by kami she had the nerve to guffaw at him before waving her hand dismissively, admitting that his suggestion sounded *okay* .

On the fifteenth, while watching a Koala documentary, Asuka revealed she was planning on getting married after the war ended, and he snorted in his soft drink so *disastrously* that the burn didn't leave him for hours.

"You were seventeen!"

"I told you we were full-fledged adults by Konoha law."

"That is outrageous," he said, sounding odd from his burning nostrils and throat.

"It wasn't odd, whoever worked in similar professions either got married early, or late, and with our situation with the war and everything, Shikamaru and I decided on early."

"But you were seventeen, " he repeated, horrified.

He still hadn't recovered from that shock. Asuka with her baby face and sparkling eyes expressing that she was about to *marry* — the mere thought of it unsettled him.

"Oh." her voice yanked him out of his thoughts, "Papa I just got kidnapped."

He was too afflicted to ask why the fuck she was grinning.

*

Chapter End Notes

HAHAHA another cliff hanger.

Confusing ending, I know. Stay tuned for the next chapter and

hope this was a good read!

ALSO, we hit 1000+ kudos and I'm crying. Thank you so much



If any of you want to reach out to me here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)

LIST OF OC's

Watanabe Takeru- btch mother

Kimura Azusa- officer at hero commission

Maruyama Eiko- officer at hero commission

Kozume- supplier

Still a kid

Chapter Summary

Shota is conflicted, Asuka is confused, Katsuki is losing it, and a baby is delivered. (defo not in that order)

Chapter Notes

This chapter is Beta read by Grig9700.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

18th October 3101

There was a presence that had been tailing her since she had been discharged from the hospital, one with an ominous core. It lingered around their houses' vicinity, unmoving and eerie, then when she went out on her normal routine, going over to her friends' house, and making trips to the park and stores, he followed her at a distance.

Her initial guess had been the hero commission, but as unethical as she found the commission to be, their methods of coercion were more... normal. *This* was just outright weird. And the man's baleful aura only heightened the oddity.

Maybe she should've told her father about the occurrence, but she wanted to observe before doing or saying anything. He was protective enough as it was with the bucket of absurdity she had poured onto him. He didn't think her being only a year younger than him (soul-wise), and her fighting prowess was any reason to lax his precaution against her *'impulsive personality that got her into trouble more times than he could count*

Be that as it may, she didn't want him to experience any more heart-wrenching surprises, so she opted for the safest way to stake out; a bunshin.

In the end, she even sent a text to Kozume with the description of the

walking cotton candy, and his findings were more non-pulsing than anything.

Cotton Candy's name was Kurogiri, and he was a notoriously famous bartender in the underworld.

On the particular day that he had sprung to action, Asuka contemplated torturing the information out of him, but since he was capturing a clone, it readily acted like a perplexed eight-year-old. She let herself be enclosed in the growing warp, mock horror plaguing her face. Said mock horror convulsed to tears moments after she landed in a space shrouded in an inauspicious green light, eyes directed at a bald man who wore a doctor's coat.

Cotton candy was no simple bartender, it seemed.

Her sight observed the tall tubed capsules that stood proudly behind the bald man, some filled with lime liquid, others supporting odd-looking beings *and* lime green liquid. She didn't need to activate her quirk to know that these held the same ominous chakra. Though that didn't compare to the substantial presence behind her, and on queue with the odd hiss said presence produced, she turned to face his looming figure hooked up in all sorts of machines.

"Aizawa Asuka." the scarred man boomed, grinning.

Instincts jabbed at her to move away from him. She didn't listen.

"Who are you?" her voice shook.

Laughter bloomed from the man in the chair, loud and heavy, "It's alright, *Asuka-chan*."

"I want to go home." she wobbled out, fists clenched from fighting her intuition.

"Don't worry," The bald man spoke this time, Cotton Candy's frame standing right next to him. "You'll be going home pretty soon, but before that," this one grinned too, resembling a depraved old geezer that hunted kids for a living, "we'll be needing your pretty little quirks."

No sooner had his words sunk in, she obeyed her instincts. Pumping a bout of chakra into her legs, she did a back flip, perching on one of the tubes that didn't carry a brain-swelled thing, or bird, or whatever it was supposed to be. Her quirk activated on a whim, looming at the

three below her, all of whom now held a certain degree of bewilderment.

Needing your pretty little quirks

How self-explanatory.

“Huh, how quaint.” the scarred man spoke, “Was there something I missed in her file?”

The doctor sputtered something incomprehensible, then, “That can’t be right, Sensei.”

Asuka didn't have time for idle chatter. “You’re from the myths,” she said. Myths that only the older generation took significance in. Myths that transmuted to tales parents retold to scare their kids. Myths that Kozume told her with hilarity while Haruto, his right-hand man and senior by twenty years tutted at him.

A hiss echoed with his heavy breath, lips still tugged in amusement. “Indeed.”

Unblinkingly, she noticed how his chakra core was *black*. She hadn't ever seen black. “Then let’s get this straight,” she drawled, “even if you managed to steal my quirk— which you won’t— you can’t *possibly* cure yourself with my quirk. It’s impossible.”

That wasn't the exact truth. Not that she cared enough to tell the whole truth.

“Impossible, you say,” he said lowly, tilting his head. “You won’t have to worry about that, child. Kurogiri.”

“Yes, Master.”

“Get her down before she gets hurt.”

Her eyebrows twitched.

“My quirk cannot be—”

“She can’t keep her eyes open forever.” the geezer seethed, glaring at Cotton Candy.

She smirked, that’s where they were wrong. “Hey Scar-face,” she called, managing to get a rise of the geezer while he hissed about how disrespectful she was, “this is a hypothetical question, if by chance, I

don't know, I pull out those wires connected to you, would you die?"

"Impertinent brat, I'll make a mincemeat out of you—"

"You are calm compared to when you were brought here." Scarface voiced, "Is there a reason for that?"

"Acting." she threw, bored.

"Acting?" he repeated stupidly.

"Yes *acting*," she pressed, "Fluff ball over there sucks at stalking and I wanted to know why he was following me."

Laughter rumbled.

Was this bastard demented?

She should've treaded lightly considering this was supposedly a centuries-old villain who had the most convenient quirk of *stealing* other quirks, but he was currently crippled and had tubes to support his very existence, so his pathetic state demanding to steal her Byakugou seal that he couldn't even control and would possibly explode from the overload due to the large input of chakra was quite frankly *vexing*.

Maybe she should kill him here. It was certainly a favor the world would benefit from.

No.

Ugh.

Papa.

For some outlandish reason, her subconscious was more active after waking from the coma, though its inputs were more random than anything.

"Listen here," she snapped, patience thinning, "I don't have time for this, either get off my back and let me go, or get your ass tossed into one of these tubes you lot seem to like beautifying this place with."

If she were to tell her father everything *relevant* like she promised, she preferred keeping it a little less violent. Killing someone who tried to kidnap her, no matter how conventional that may be in the Shinobi nations, was unfortunately not the norm here. Which, in her opinion,

was stupid. Plus she was sure her father couldn't handle it. For all the horrors that he encountered during his job, it was certain that eliminating villains was something no hero adhered to; Capturing? Yes.

Accidental manslaughter? *Maybe.*

Intent to *kill* during the action? Never, it seemed.

“Sensei, I want to dissect her.”

Three

“All in good times, Doctor.” the man in the chair spoke, his tone lazy.

Two.

“You’re done for, you minx,” the geezer cackled, “Sensei was nice enough to let you go after retrieving your quirks, but that mouth of yours has led to your demise.”

One.

A grin etched on her face as she descended, her first target being the infernal geezer who ticked her off for too many reasons. His beige-colored core buzzed in apprehension, her shin meeting the side of his face, the burnt of her kick sending him flying into a lime-tinted pod, shards of glass exploding with contact. The geezer screamed though it was soon muffled by the wretched-looking thing that bowled over him, brain bulging, unmoving, and sizable enough to detain the older man under its weight.

“Kurogiri—” she relished the caution lacing the centuries-old villain's voice, ducking under the Fluff ball's wispy hands as her fist collided with the alloy manning his neck, knocking him into the same green-tinted capsule she was previously standing on, his body drenching with the liquid. And judging by how serene his ugly green chakra core was, she deemed him unconscious before veering her attention to the alarmed boss who probably couldn't see her without the use of whatever quirk he had been using before.

“What are you?” he seethed, an angry hiss sizzling with a hefty exhale. Amusedly, she noted that If he had a nose, it would've probably flared.

A thin layer of chakra glazed over her eyes, diminishing the slight

prickles affecting her, “No one you need to involve yourself with.” she quipped back, bouncing on her heels as she contemplated how to throw him off the chair without killing him.

He survived for centuries.

Right, there was that too. He undoubtedly had some aging quirk cooped in that body of his. But he didn't have his quirk right now, did he?

“Listen up, *All for One*, ” she said, ascending to the air once more and swiftly landing on one of the beeping machines behind him. He craned his neck to her presence, mouth set in indignation, most likely glaring at her. “I'll leave you here, *alive*. But if I find one of your minions sniffing around *me, my family*, or anyone I'm *remotely* familiar with, then know that I won't be so merciful next time.”

“You are not a child.”

She rolled her eyes, “I don't fucking care what you think of me, just stay out of my way.”

“...you are willing to leave me be?”

Of course not. There was *experimentation* going around here, the murky chakra cores in the bird-like, brain-bulging things were similar to Kurogiri the Fluff ball, so *no*, she wasn't leaving this alone. Her conscience wouldn't let her. Who knew what poor souls suffered under this tyrant?

She didn't answer him, opting to hop off the machine, and before she hit the ground, her foot changed direction mid-air, a kick perforating the side of his scarred face and knocking him out clean.

The incessant beeping of his machines echoed behind her as she made her way out of the musty hideout, duly noting where she was before shunshin to the nearest stationery store, then as soon as she was done, her clone dissipated into thin air.

*

“....so someone's been following you for *days*, and instead of telling me like you're *supposed to*, you tell your mob of loan sharks—”

“Everyone at Tsujisuji is great!”

“—to track down his information, then you get yourself *kidnapped* because you couldn’t fathom their motive, and *then* you decided to knock out an ancient villain who’s an alleged *fib*- and his posse after finding out they wanted to steal your quirks?”

“I reported them too.” she quipped, “Like a law-abiding citizen I wrote an anonymous letter concluding details of what I witnessed in the lab and slipped it into the nearest police station I could find.”

He gave her a Look. She only blinked.

“What? I did say I was going to do this hero thing right? And my quirk was used for an emergency so that doesn't count.” she popped off a lid of one of the many thumb-sized glass bottles she owned, carefully pouring the fluid into it. “Plus it wasn't my actual self who was doing the fighting so it's all good this time, right?” she added as an afterthought.

He produced a strangled noise from his throat.

“Oh come on, Papa, I didn't even kill him because you’d be mad.”

He tugged his hair this time. *Just what was she doing wrong?*

“You’re grounded.” he finally said. “ *For life.* ”

She ceased her act of packing the medicine, an involuntary squawk escaping her, “For what? Defending myself?!”

“For a lot of things that I can’t seem to wrap my head around right now.”

“That’s not fair!”

He didn't listen to her protest as he stood up, retreating to his room while mumbling incoherently. Asuka scowled, continuing to cram the rest of the medicine for the month.

*

Sirens buzzed about, lights of blue and red glowing along with it.

Dear Whichever Policeman or Policewoman Picks This Up,

This anonymous writer has just escaped from a kidnapping and has important information to convey to you.

The man who kidnapped me could warp, after reaching the place where the instigator of my kidnapping was, a brief conversation was exchanged and I figured out their motive. They wanted to steal my quirk. The one with the warp gate was named Kurogiri, he looked like Cotton candy, he had wisps of purple for skin, there was also a doctor with a bald head and bushy mustache. the final one was a man in a chair hooked up in all sorts of machines, he was badly scared, his only notable feature being a fully intact mouth. He was referred to as 'Master' and 'Sensei'. In the end, I fought them off and knocked them out clean. Due to my circumstances, I could not give this to you in person, nor can I come forth with my identity. During my fleeting stay there, I have concluded that possible human experimentation has occurred in space. Please arrest them and serve justice.

Address: Yokohama city, Kanagawa prefecture, Kamino ward. Behind an abandoned warehouse next to Shiba Shiba's Cold Soba.

Sincerely,

A law-abiding citizen.

"This is it?" Toshinori asked, his phone tautly pressed against his thumb.

Naomasa nodded, "That's all we got. Kondo Akifumi received the letter, but he has no recollection of anyone leaving it there."

The car came to a jolting halt, and Toshinori was the first one out, his wide frame easily overshadowing the police present on the scene.

"A-All Might? What are you doing here?"

Toshinori gave an unstrained smile.

"Ahane, what's the situation?" Naomasa intervened smoothly.

At that, police officer Ahane Fumito frowned, "It's not looking good, the three perps mentioned in the letter have seemed to have escaped, aside from that, we've confirmed the laboratory to be the same as the

Anonymous described. And our forces are gathering evidence as we speak.”

Uncharastically, Toshinori tugged Naoamasa to the side, his blue eyes bubbling with apprehension, “Can you get this case transferred to you?”

Naomasa sighed, “I have to try, but Tosh— All Might, we aren't even *sure* if this All For One, he died, remember?” the detective prodded, “*You* killed him.”

“No,” the Symbol of Peace said, “I *thought* I killed him. This is his work, who else has a quirk the same as him? The description provided in the letter, if he survived with those injuries, then we need to find him before he recovers.”

“So you’re saying this *Anonymous* individual managed to escape from All For One? That tyrant? And even had enough time to drop in a letter at the police station before disappearing from the face of the earth, is that what you’re assuming, All Might?” The sarcasm in Naomasa’s tone was difficult to dismiss.

“Yes, that is exactly what I’m *assuming* .” the taller of the two gritted.

After a considerable amount of glaring from Toshinori, Naomasa gave in.

19th October 3101

On the morning of the day, after she got *grounded* for defending herself against a centennial old villain and his cronies, her lovely father had all but *disappeared* from the house to go to his precious teaching job two hours ahead of the standard time *on a weekend*, but not before forgetting to leave a note saying: *Breakfast in the fridge. You’re still grounded, and that includes your clones.*

How nice of him.

Ramming a nice nail on her frustration, she heated the food and finished it in less than fifteen minutes. Then indulged Fergus with a nice belly rub while Oni stuffed his face.

“The boys and I were going to spar today, y’know?” she murmured, feeling herself relax from the softness of his fur.

Fergus purred, she retaliated with a hum. “I know I win all the time, but the spars aren’t for *me*, it’s for them.”

A meow echoed and she watched Oni saunter his way to her. “Yes, apparently I’m stuck at home. *For life*. Can you *believe* him? He didn’t even ground me when I socked that fifth grader.”

Oni rubbed his head against her arm, a variety of meows vaguely resembling chatter ambling out of his mouth.

“Well, of course I know *why* he didn’t ground me then, the pussy boy started it first. But this is *different*,” her other hand scratched behind his ears and he trilled, “I defend myself against a villain using a goddamn bunshin without even putting my *real* self in danger, and he punishes me for *what*? Do you know how unfair this is? He didn’t even have the gall to face me this morning.” she huffed while both cats snuggled near her, Oni next to her right hip, Fergus on her lap.

Her head plopped on the sofa and she slid downwards, creasing the carpet under her, “Ugh, Whatever, I don’t have time for this. Come on you both,” she scooped the sepia from her lap and tucked him under her arm, then did the same to Oni. “we’re going to do some real work. Might as well make use of this ‘punishment’.”

Both cats yowled.

*

When Shota returned home, the first thing he smelled was *smoke*. And with such bad memories attached to the odor, he sprinted to the source.

“Why the hell is my table missing a leg?”

Relief sizzled in his heart when he observed that the space wasn’t *burning*, but a hundred questions rose when the coffee table missed a leg and Asuka was hunched over the floor, papers upon papers spreading the space with scribbles that he had a hard time deciphering.

“Asuka what are you doing—”

“Shhh!” she cut in, her head still facing the ground, “I’m almost done. Silence, please.”

He blinked, eyes tracing back to the scorched leg of the coffee table, then to her hair which had smoke rising from a single wisp in the middle.

“HA!” she sprang up, dangling a slip of paper from her hand, black smudges on her cheek. “Watch what I’m going to do,” she said, grinning as she went on to slap the rectangular paper on one of the three intact legs of his coffee table. With silent wonder, he watched the paper submerged into the opaque wood, a beat later his arm was being tugged further away from the table, and within considerable distance, she made a hand sign she referred to as the ‘*release*’

Then she started cackling. “It worked! It worked! It didn’t blow up this time!”

“ *Explain .* ”

Her grin somehow managed to get wider, “Oh you’ll like this one.”

He doubts it. “I’ll like the reason why you’ve been denoting my furniture?”

The black-haired gremlin clicked her tongue, prancing to her array of papers littering the floor, “It’s a small price to pay for what I’ve just created.”

He sighed deeply.

“I got news from Kozume, apparently they all escaped,” she divulged, crouching on the floor once more while picking up a brush, dipping it in a mortar full of ink.

Of course, she knew that, apparently her information network at age eight was much deeper than his. “That doesn’t explain why my table is missing a leg.”

“I’m getting to that.” she hummed, her wrists bending along with the strokes she made on the piece of paper. “Since I have no guarantee on whether or not All for One and his crew would try to chase me or target my family, I had to prepare a countermove to match his actions. Kozume is trustworthy, but I bet His run even deeper like the dude is

the king of the underworld for Kami's sake, I can't possibly match that now can I?"

Evidently, she had no claims on punting said 'King' of the underworld.

"You're planning on fighting someone, *again* ?" he pressed, "Have you forgotten why you're grounded?"

She kept her brush down and stood up, her black smudged hand containing a strip of paper she had just been working on. "Of course, I remember *why* I'm grounded, it's such a historic moment after all, to be grounded for *defending oneself* against villains." Then in rapid motions, she lifted his shirt and stuck the paper on his stomach, his navel feeling ticklish for a nanosecond.

"What the fu—"

"It's a locator seal." she deadpanned. "If All for one attempts to kidnap you, I'll know where you are. My specialty isn't in fuinjutsu, but I've seen Shikamaru working on seals 'cos he did part-time in the seal division." her quirk activated with rainbow eyes and flailing hair, "I'm sorry for the table, all the rock in the garden disintegrated so I moved my work here." blinding eyes traveled up and stopped above his head, her mouth etching into a smug grin.

He didn't share the sentiment. " *This* is an invasion of my privacy."

Asuka shrugged, "It's either your privacy or your life, I think the choice should be obvious."

He massaged his neck, looking up to the ceiling for help.

"I'm not going to stalk you if that's what you're worried about." she added, "It's only a safety precaution."

"I'm not worried about that." he countered, what unnerved him was that there was a prospect of someone kidnapping him and his savior would be his *daughter* of all people. And the first time was a quintessential example of why he didn't want to experience anything remotely similar to that.

"Then what's the problem? I'm going to do the same for Inko-oba, Izuku, Mitsuki-oba, Masaru-oji, Katsuki, Kayama-oba, Hizashi-oji, the baby that's on the way, Sana-chan, Kozume—"

“How are you even *sure* he’s going to act up? You said he was injured.”

“He’s also lived for more than a century.” she retorted, “Plus I kicked his face and exposed his diabolic laboratory so that would warrant *some* form of revenge from him.”

He stared at her. Blinking once, twice. “Clean up and come to the kitchen.”

She did a mock salute, crouching once more to pick up her locator devices without an ounce of technology. He carried his feet to the kitchen, sighing when he witnessed the jumbled garden through the window. Deciding on sesame Soba noodles for dinner, he pulled his hair into a short bun and reached for the pantry, plopping a bundle of premade buckwheat noodles on the counter.

“Say, when do I get *ungrounded* ?”

He didn't turn around, focusing on filling his pot of water. “When you figure out the real reason why you’re grounded.”

A huff resounded, “I don't get it. Is it *my* fault they targeted me— well I *guess* it’s sort of my fault, but that’s beside the point. I didn't even put my real self in danger. I couldn't just let them kick me around, what better way to counter them than to knock them clean? I admit it was a bit stupid of me to just let them lay around like sacks of potatoes, should’ve tied them up or something—”

This is what nagged him. She was so...so *nonchalant* about the whole thing. The kidnapping, defeating villains, *taking it on her own without telling him anything*. Wasn't it decided that she wouldn't hide anything from him anymore? Especially matters regarding her safety? Asuka had instead let someone stalk her, got herself— her clone— kidnapped to figure out their motive, and was now formulating tracking devices because she was worried about said archaic villain pursuing the people around her. It was certain that her way of thinking was due to her past life, but that didn't mean it agitated him any less. Whether she was mentally twenty-six or forty-eight, the fact of the matter was that she was still his daughter, someone he loved more than life itself, someone he wouldn't stand getting herself in harm’s way no matter how well-versed she was in fighting.

“—you know I’m not a mind reader, right? I don't know what got you so mad, I know plenty of things I do are unconventional in your eyes, but I can’t help it, papa. Unless you tell me what I did wrong, I can’t

fix my bad habits.”

He supposed she made fair points. It was up to him to distinguish between right and wrong and fix her eccentric perception that made his heart shred to pieces.

Hands worked to wash the soba in cold water, the side of his head prickling with her gaze. “Fine, you want to know why you’re grounded?” he shut the faucet, leaning against the counter as he turned to face her, “It’s because you’re keeping things from me. *Again*. I’m not asking you to tell me *everything*, everyone has secrets they’d rather keep to themselves, *especially* with a unique case such as yourself, but what you told me yesterday *directly* correlated with your safety and time and time I’ve told you that I *worry*,” water dripped from his hand and onto the vinyl floor, “No matter how *weak* I may be compared to a soul that fought a goddamn war, I’m still competent enough to defend you. I’m your tou-san, you’re my daughter, and *I’m* supposed to protect you, it’s not the other way around.”

Asuka stared at him, face contoured to something akin to awe. “Oh.”

Shota bit his cheek. *Oh?* What the hell did that mean?

“I didn’t think...” she trailed off, looking sheepish, “It’s just recently I kind of kept dumping all these absurd stories of my past life and then I know even if you don’t say anything it’s still a lot to take in, and then telling you about my stalker— It’s just, it would be too stressful, y’know? The stalking thing is kind of severe, like severe enough to tell *you*, and I didn’t because well — the main point *is*, I’m sorry.” she stepped forward, blinking up at him.

He stared down into her eyes, his victory feeling more bittersweet than anything. *Why did this kid have to be so considerate about his feelings?*

Finally, he let his hand ruffle her hair, “As long as you understand.”

She grinned, her arms circling his torso, squeezing tightly. “Don’t blame me if you pass out from too much stress.”

He patted her back, “Never.”

On the eve of March twenty-seventh, Kayama's scream ripped through the air, her husband's voice following after.

"Which one of them is giving birth again?" Tomoko drawled, wiping at her painted whiskers with her paw mittens.

Asuka held back a snort, biting into her ice cream which her father had brought on their way to the hospital. Kayama had been in labor ever since that morning, despite that, she had only arrived after finishing school that day. She nudged at him with her elbow, blinking up at him with a grin, "Remember the bet?" she whispered.

He looked like he wanted to roll his eyes, "I didn't pitch in," he unpocketed a handkerchief, hovering it over her face and rubbing the ice cream from the tip of her nose.

"You're no fun." she retorted, lulling her legs and brushing them along the floor.

"I agree." Tomoko nodded, "Even Shinya-kun put his bet, how could you, as Kayama-chan's closest friend, not participate?"

"Kamihara would go along with anything you wanted," Shota grunted.

Asuka laughed, "Papa thinks it's a waste of money."

"What a miser." Tomoko remarked, circling a hand around Asuka's shoulder as she brought the girl into a half hug, "At least this angel knows how to have fun."

She beamed.

"So? What did you bet on?"

Asuka offered a sly grin, "A boy."

Tomoko blinked, then a laugh trickled out, "Not many people chose that option, do you know something we don't, Asuka-chan?"

Of course, she did. "It's a gut feeling," she said instead, taking a rather large bite of her ice cream, feeling eyes on the back of her head.

Tomoko squeezed her, nudging her paintless cheek against hers, much like Kayama did, "How can you be this adorable?" she squealed, "

Kyahlh I want to have kids too!”

“You’ll have one soon,” Asuka said indiscreetly, plopping the last piece of the cone into her mouth.

The greenette ceased the venture of squeezing the nine-year-old. Shota almost sighed, bringing the handkerchief to wipe her mouth once more.

“....what do you mean by that?”

Shit.

Idiot.

“Her quirk does that.” her father answered lazily, “It can detect...presences. She’s still young so it acts on its own when she isn’t able to subdue it.” she blinked at her father’s nonchalant lie, forcing her mouth not to gape, “Congratulations, Shiretoko, you’re pregnant.”

“Congratulations, Tomo-oba!” she chimed along, “Don’t worry, we’ll keep this a secret from Shin-oji.”

“W-what- I’m *what?* ” she stuttered, possibly malfunctioning.

Before they could reconfirm, Hizashi burst out the door, ugly crying, snot flowing out his nose, but distinctly happy, “IT’S A BOY!”

*

Shota felt extremely nostalgic while carrying the small bundle in his arm. To think Asuka was once this small. “What’s his name?” he asked, gently brushing the short wisps of purple hair with his thumb.

Kayama leaned against her pillow, stabbing a toothpick into the apple slices Hizashi cut, “Seiya. Yamada Seiya.”

“I chose it!” Hizashi perked up, grinning.

“Seiya. Sei-chan.” Tomoko tested, peering at the bundle Shota was holding, “He’s adorable!”

“Well, he’s my kid so that’s given.”

“ *Our* .”

“Yeah, yeah, but I’m the pretty one in our relationship.”

“You callin’ your husband ugly?”

“Yes.”

“Do you realize— *Ow*, what was that for?!”

“Zashi-oji,” Asuka pressed, retracting the finger she used to pinch her uncle’s arm, “I wonder what you did to win her heart.”

Hizashi blinked, dumbfounded. Though before he could inquire what that meant, she trotted away to where Shota stood, going on her tippy-toes to observe the baby.

“I don’t get it,” he said, looking over to his wife.

Kayama smiled in return, leisurely chewing on her apple.

29th March 3102

“You said..it..” his fist slammed the ground, kicking up dust. “.. *trade* ...”

“Well, I didn’t know you were going to just stand there and take it!” Asuka refuted, stomping over to his crumpled figure. Green chakra brimmed to life as she allocated the broken rib, gently pulling it to its former position, careful of numbing the nerves to alleviate his pain.

“You could’ve given me a warning before lunging like that,” he grunted, sitting up as his hand went to his chest.

She huffed, “I didn’t know you were going to cower like that.”

“You expected me to hit you back with the same force you were coming at me?!” he asked in incredulity.

“I said it was a trade!” she protested, “You teach me how to use your weapon bindings, and I teach you my taijutsu.” she stood up from the crouch, both hands taking place on her hips, “Papa you have to take

me seriously or this isn't going to work.”

He glared.

“Oh come on, just think of me as one of your students. I can even change my face if you don’t feel comfortable sparring with me.”

His reluctance was anticipated. Being a hero, her intended occupation was only decided mere months ago, but he still wasn't on board with the plan, nor did he think ‘*skipping grades*’ was the best thing when she was given a second chance at life. *Enjoy what you have*, he had said.

But she couldn't possibly enjoy anything when the rules of this world were so ridiculous.

She had to get her hands on that hero license, garnering attention be damned. If that was what it took to secure a safe livelihood for the people around her without getting condemned, then she’d gladly do it.

“Fine.” he juttied, standing up and dusting his pants, “I’ll be serious this time.”

"Great" she beamed, getting into stance.

Suffice to say, his actions matched his words this time.

"Just *why* do you keep trying to break my ribs?!"

"I don't know papa, why'd you sprain my ankle?"

"You can heal!"

"And bones grow back stronger the more they break."

"You—"

"I thought we were pointing out the obvious."

*

In the isolated training ground, both father and daughter sat against a

tree, considerably tired, and abundantly hungry, so much so that the latter of the two had resorted to plucking wild berries. Although Shota was worried that it might be poisonous, he decided to trust her on this since, well, she was a *doctor*.

"I talked to Nedzu the other day."

Asuka perked up immediately, "Did he grade my papers?"

Shota nodded, shivering slightly due to the breeze cooling his sweat. Nedzu had given him a rather long evaluation of her performance and hinted, to Shota's agitation, that he was interested in taking Asuka as his protégé. He, of course, didn't stand for it. The girl was already too clever for her good, adding that maniacal rat to the mix, and he just might have a headache he wouldn't ever recover from.

"Well, what'd he say? How many grades can I skip?" Asuka prodded, nudging at his arm while he held back a wince. Apparently healing *too much* would slow down his natural restorative abilities.

"Enough to plaster yourself on the news," he said. Contrary to what he was expecting, her expression wasn't one of immense joy.

How odd.

"Your maths, Japanese, science, social studies, and history are on par with college students. He mentioned something about how you'd be proficient in political science if given the right nurturing. You had the lowest marks in English." he stretched his legs, letting the sun warm him. "As for the other aptitude tests and simulations, it's not wrong to assume that Nedzu is *completely* enamored with you."

"So I can skip to hero training if I want to?" she asked, her tone mild.

He took one of the wild berries bunched in the pale pink handkerchief and plopped it to his mouth. "Probably," he agreed.

"Then—"

"But I'm not going to let you throw yourself into such chaos."

Her agitation didn't go unmissed.

"Technically speaking if we have Nedzu backing you, then it's easy enough to get you enrolled into high school right now, but like I said—"

" *I'm still a kid.* "

"Exactly," he confirmed, ruffling her hair. She was learning so well. "you're still a kid, and I want you to enjoy what you have despite your goal. So at most, I'm willing to let you skip three grades."

The nine-year-old opened her mouth.

"I'm not going to negotiate."

She closed her mouth, pouting. "That's fine I *guess.* "

The wind blew, sifting cherry blossoms from the tree above, "You'll be enrolling in middle school coming April." he mumbled, looking up at the sky.

It was too soon.

His gaze averted to Asuka, a light smile tugging at his lips as he watched her stuff berries into her mouth.

"Huh, what'd you say?" she asked, blinking up at him.

Too damn soon.

5th April 3102

"—YOU ABSOLUTE CHEAT, WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU'RE JUST SKIPPING GRADES?! YOU KNOW I CAN HANDLE A LOT OF YOUR BULLSHIT, BUT THIS IS—" Katsuki's legs folded, landing him face-first on the ground.

"Stop being so loud."

"Damn you, Ehara! Stay out of it!" Katsuki recovered, carelessly wiping the dirt off his face.

"I would've if you hadn't disturbed the whole park."

"Now, now, Sana-chan, Katsuki's just a bit ruffled that I'm gaining ground faster than him," Asuka smirked, drawing a hand around her friend's shoulder, Sana's unruly mess of oak hair swaying with the

motion, “let him vent some more, or he might just *combust*. ”

“Wait, wait, just why are you suddenly moving onto middle school?” Izuku asked, frazzled.

Her smirk transformed to a grin as she regarded the greenette, “*Katsuki* said you both are going to be heroes first, I couldn't very well let you guys beat me into that, now can I?”

“So you’re skimming over to middle school?!” Katsuki bursted, glaring.

She gave him a shit-eating smile for an answer.

His pop-rock quirk went off, then Sana’s oak-tinted hair rose to life, precariously rotating like Kiba’s gatsuuga.

“O-oi, both of you, calm down.” Izuku placated, tugging at Katsuki’s shirt.

“Touch an inch of her and I’ll shove my hair down your throat.”

“I’d like to see you try!”

“Asuka-chan, you shouldn’t hang out with this dog anymore, the ungrateful thing can’t even be happy for its master.”

“Sana-chan, Katsuki is my *friend*, remember?”

“Says the crazy bitch.” the blond sneered.

“He just called you a bitch.” Sana said, turning to Asuka as her vivid amber eyes gleamed.

She held back a snort.

“I’m calling *you* a bitch!”

Asuka first met Sana when she was six. And like every other encounter with someone she could call a *friend*, Sana was being picked on for being the gloomy thing that she was. And like every other day of fighting against ill-mannered brats, she was going to step in when the amber-eyed girl proceeded to give them a verbal berating.

‘Is there a reason why you’re picking on me?’

‘Does there hav’fta be a reason for everythin’ we do?’ the stubby kid

retorted.

'I see.' Sana nodded, *'I guess you're doing this for your fulfillment.'*

'Look at her usin' big w'rds.' another chimed, cackling.

'I've read about people like you.' Sana divulged, looking as unbothered as before being cornered.

'Huh?!'

'Bullies like you typically have bad situations at home; are you being neglected? Is that why you feel the need to oppress people who look like easy prey to you? To feel needed? To feel like you have some form of purpose in your pathetic lives? Or is it because you enjoy it? Some people are just generally twisted, incapable of feeling emotions, it has a medical term too —'

"What are you sayin — '

Sana was blunt, precise, somewhat dense, and extremely poised for a kid. She was somehow on the same wavelength as her, and that was enough of a reason for Asuka to befriend her. Then there was also the additional fact that she and Katsuki fought like cat and mouse, adding a hefty sum to her daily dose of entertainment. At first, she couldn't comprehend *why* Sana was so protective over her despite all the brawls, rumors, and fibs surrounding her, then later she didn't care much because honestly, it was just endearing.

"Okay, kids." she interrupted, triggering her quirk and making theirs go slack. *"Let's not fight, shall we?"*

After Katsuki had somewhat sizzled down, the group of friends sat under the foliage of the mulberry tree in their not-so-secret base.

"Was Oji-san on board?" Izuku asked, tilting his head.

Asuka nodded, *"I even got my measurements taken for the uniform."*

"What kind of absurd tricks did you pull to just prance from elementary to middle school, you damn cheater runt?!"

Asuka sighed dramatically, whipping her charcoal hair as if reenacting a shampoo commercial, *"Katsuki, I'm just a natural-born genius, how is that so hard to comprehend?"*

"He has a pea-sized brain is why." Sana chipped in, her tone blanker

than a board on the first day of school.

The blond gritted his teeth, "I'm going to kill you one of these days."

"See, Asuka-chan? The dog is barking such scathing insults at you again.."

"I said that at *you* , you demented gyrate!"

"Will you both quiet down?!" Izuku snapped.

Unsurprisingly, they both shut up, and she bit her cheek from laughing.

"Asuka-chan, are you really fine with this?" Izuku queried, freckled face contouring with worry. "You're younger than us, and to suddenly move to middle school, wouldn't that put you in a difficult position? You shouldn't hurry along just to spite Kacchan."

"I agree with Izuku-kun." Sana divulged, "You shouldn't spare much effort to spite *this* one," her thumb whipped at Katsuki, "and it's too soon for you to just transfer to middle school. This world is a scary place, you shan't taint your eyes with such horror so early on. Enjoying your childhood is a necessity, Asuka-chan."

"....I feel like your description of middle school is severely different from mine, I'm not going to war, Sana-chan."

Sana shook her head. "Middle school *is* war. Nii-san said so. And with you being so small and vulnerable, their target will be quite obvious."

"*Vulnerable?* Are we talkin' 'bout the same person here?" Katsuki said, bamboozled.

Asuka laughed, "Sana-chan, remember my nickname from school?"

The amber-eyed girl scowled, discarding her blank demeanor, "Akuma Asuka , " she said, spitting it out like poison, "Extremely unbecoming."

"It's incredible how she's come to regard Asuka-chan despite all that she's seen," Izuku stumbled out.

Katsuki beside him nodded with fervor, "Bitch is absolutely bonkers."

Asuka snuggled the girl in a hug instead, immensely amused, "It's alright, Sana-chan if anyone bothers me, I'll be sure to tell you." then she regarded Izuku, her cheek still squished against Sana's, "You don't

have to worry either, as much as it's a bonus to see Katsuki losing it
—”

The blond growled.

“I’m doing it of my own volition.”

Izuku gave a small smile, one shrouded in resignation, “If you say so.”

*

Chapter End Notes

Helo!!

How’d y'all like this chapter? ^^

Just a few more chapters to go and we’ll be jumping on the canon flow~~(not entirely, things will be exponentially different lol) As for the three year grade skip, I’ll leave it up to your imagination on where she’s going to end up and who she’s going to be classmates with. Lots of ppl assumed she’d be with Izuku and Katsuki but I had PLANS HAHAHA—

On a much more serious note, updates this month will be super slow as I have assignments to complete, sorry for that :(

Hope this was a good read and a millions thanks for the rising kudos! Also, I apologise for the comments I haven’t been able to respond to, I most definitely do read them♡♡♡

If any of you want to reach out to me, here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)
List of OC’s

Kondo Akifumi- police officer

Ahane Fumito- police officer

Kozume- supplier/godfather

Sana-chan- bff


Yamada Seiya- Kayama/Hizashi kid

Shota-sama

Chapter Summary

Mending.Tsujisuji&co. Middle school. Inner.

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to Grig9700 for beta reading 

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

7th April 3102

Hanami was like every other year except for a notable addition to the group who had shiny blonde hair and arctic eyes. Surprisingly, it was her father who had taken the initiative to invite her, not that she minded.

“Wear the damn coat, ya twerp! Do you want to get sick again?!”

“And I’m sayin’ I don’t wanna! It’s barely snowing and I’m already wearin’ two layers!”

“K-katsuki, just listen to your Kaa-chan—”

“Even Tou-san’s wearing one layer, why can’t I?!”

Asuka rolled her eyes, “Just wear the damn thing, why are you fussier than Sei-chan?”

Izuku snorted. Katsuki glared.

“Sei-chan isn’t fussy at all.” Hizashi quipped.

He earned a whack on the head for that, “*I’m* the one who was awake all night!”

“I helped!” Hizashi bounced back, ducking at another jab, and hiding behind the baby stroller.

“Cleaning his shit *once* doesn’t make it better you asshole, pull

something like that tonight and I'll punt you out the window!"

"Judging by her weary face, I'd say that threat was well deserved," Mitsuki murmured to Inko, eyeing the scene with fondness.

"This is nice." Kazue, who positioned herself to sit in a perfect seiza, sipped the steaming green tea, "Is this how you've always come to watch Hanami? With such a large group?"

Shota nodded, his hands still busy unloading the bentos he packed, "There's the Ehara's too, but they join late since they spend time with her husband's family before coming here."

"Husband's family?" Kazue asked, quizzical of how he phrased it.

"Sana-chan's Okaa-san is an orphan," Asuka explained, picking sashimi from the nearest bento. "And her Otou-san died when she was four."

"Oh."

The conversation veered off when Mitsuki, with her boisterous voice and welcoming nature, started speaking to Kazue, who in Asuka's opinion, still looked very new to such human interaction. Soon enough, bentos were shared, chopsticks were handed out, and tea and juice were poured into cups.

Wind still blew and buds and flowers toppled into their drinks and bento. She leaned on a tree bark to eat her lunch, then her father put two extra kamabokos into her box.

"Thank you," he said, startling her for a second.

Her ear tips turned red, "About that," she mumbled, swallowing her food, "I was pretty rude yesterday, sorry, Papa. I should apologize to Baa-chan too."

"If the purpose of these get-togethers is to mend your relationship, then this is going to need a lot more than just staring at your food. I suppose I should let you in on this secret since it has been months into this, but talking is required in these kinds of situations, Papa, Baa-chan."

At her commentary, one of the two gave her a Look, and the other laughed awkwardly. She shrugged, stabbing her fork into a piece of steak, easily

chewing the delicacy unlike the perspiring candle standing in the middle.

"It's a shame I seem to be the only member of this family to be gifted with emotional intelligence." she drawled, gleeful as her father scowled, "Even funeral halls are more interactive than this." she stabbed into another piece of steak, swiping it along some mashed potatoes before biting into it.

"Asuka-chan," her grandmother started hesitantly. "What do you suggest we do to make our gatherings more...interactive?"

Her father grunted.

Asuka swallowed her food, beaming at the question. "I'm glad someone decided to ask after three pointless dinners." she clasped her hands together, "But it's really simple; find something you both have in common. A hobby, maybe."

"Really?" her father quirked a brow, his tone more cynical than anything.

"It can help a lot more than this." she retorted, "I mean, I'm the only one enjoying this, which brings me to another point," she switched her gaze to her grandmother, "Baa-chan, as much as I love money, please stop slipping cash into my bag when you think I'm not looking. Papa just ends up giving me one slip, and puts the rest in a savings account so it doesn't do me any good for the time being."

"And pray tell why the heck a nine-year-old needs that much money?" the underground hero asked, eyebrows twitching.

"Anyways," she ignored him, beaming at the blonde, "just buy me food whenever you can, that's the direct path to my heart."

"I'll buy you anything you want."

The only male at the table winced at the radiance emitting from his mother, "Don't do that."

"Wah, you're the best!"

Her father scowled, stabbing into his steak.

"Now, what were you talking about, Asuka-chan?"

She tilted her head at the question, "Right, I was talking about hobbies. I was thinking you could bond over something enjoyable for both of you. These dinners are fine to me because I can make small talk despite this gloomy atmosphere we have here." a prickly gaze directed at her, she

skillfully regarded her earnest grandmother, "But you both are different."

She took a sip of her beverage, "With Baa-chan, you're willing to put in the effort, but you're hesitant because you know little to nothing about him—" the last time, she had described her son as 'gloomy' and 'career driven', currently, there was hardly any addition to his character description—"But that's why we're doing this." she said, ignoring her bemused father, "We're doing this because you both decided you want to put to mend your relationship. So be more assertive, Baa-chan, ask questions, get to know him; stop tippy-toeing around him because that's going to take a lot longer than this needs to be. I know Papa said that you can't just visit him daily and expect him to like you, and that's why you need to make the most of these visits."

Her grandmother's eyebrows furrow, but she gives a slow nod, mumbling a small 'understood'. Then her gaze darted to her father who oddly seemed to be gaping. Well, not like Hizashi who'd have his mouth open like a fly trap, but a subtle gaping nonetheless.

"As for you, papa," she said, disregarding his expression, "at least try to make an effort here. I know you don't have the best social battery, nor do you fancy small talk, and I'm sure it must be hard to interact with someone who was never there for you. I also know at the end of the day, those bitter feelings will still nudge your mind and pick at the smallest thing she attempts — because those small efforts will remind you why she didn't do it in the first place."

From her peripheral vision, she caught her grandmother's head drooping slightly. It pricked her now more than months before, but this was the ugly truth, and both of them needed to hear this to escalate from this nugatory dinner that only she was benefiting from.

"You're the one who agreed to try, and right now, you aren't trying, you're sulking. You're acting as if you've been dragged here when baa-chan let you pick the date because she tried to make it more accommodating for you. You're being childish, papa." he averted his eyes from her, and she didn't budge for a moment, "I'm not diminishing the fact that you've been mentally scarred by her, you have."

Asuka knew the feeling, she'd been through the same, even now, despite all the big talk about not caring an ounce for That woman, she knew well enough that there was hate, hate so substantial that bitterness just boiled within her, and that meant feelings, because hating someone meant she still spared their thoughts, still had lingering feelings despite what was said and done.

"But that doesn't negate that you gave her hope, hope these meetings will bloom into something more even if it won't be the exact parent-child relation or whatever the two of you have in mind. So either you cut it out right now, tell her you need more time, tell her you don't have the energy to bear this, tell her you can't do this because this will be straining to both sides and I'm not about to watch this unravel for another dinner." she huffed, more ruffled than intended while both adults resembled wounded puppies,

"As much as I like food, I want my family to be happy, and right now, the both of you are just making each other miserable. So, I want to know, what's it going to be? Are you both willing to change for real or is this charade going to continue?"

You're being too pushy.

Oh shove it, I'm trying to get this family to work!

And you haven't once thought they might make a decision based on you? Despite fully knowing how much they both treasure you, Sakura —

I'm not big-headed enough to think everything is about me, they'll choose right now, and if they choose to try, then we'll get them a damn hobby, and tips from bonding with your estranged son/mother 101, and if not, I'm not forcing papa into anything he doesn't want to do.

These things need time.

And then she was gone, back to hide in whatever hole she crawled out from. (Inner this time around was too damn weird)

"I, um," her grandmother started, hesitant, "sorry, Shota, I've been too insensitive and pushy. I'm okay with whatever time you'll be ready, I'll leave now—"

"I like knitting."

Asuka blinked.

Kazue blinked.

"I like knitting," he repeated gruffly, distinctly uncomfortable, "so if you're ever free, drop by the house between four and seven, if you're fine with it, we can do that together since you know how to knit."

"O-oh," her grandmother stuttered, doing a bad job at keeping her tears at

bay, "Yes, I'd like that very much." she wobbled out.

Asuka grinned, and her grin somehow made her eyes sting, but it was okay.

More than okay.

*

"Why are you always whining like a mutt whenever I see you?" Sana voiced, annoyed as she threw the rock she picked up a minute before joining them into the lake. It's where most kids were now with a few adults scattered around to supervise, and with their group, Hizashi sat a few meters away from them, observing with a smile as if he hadn't been punished for pissing off Kayama for the third time that day.

Katsuki clicked his tongue, "Why do I always *see you* ?"

"Because you have eyes?" Izuku tuned in mirthfully, throwing another rock that bounces on the surface of the water a considerable amount of times before it succumbs to its weight.

The blond is quite certainly ticked off, swiping a rock off the ground, and it only bounced thrice before dipping into the lake. "Argghh, not-fucking-fair! What the hell are you doing to make it bounce for that long?!" he shook Izuku by the jacket while the freckled boy laughed freely.

"Don't be such a sore loser, Kacchan, you have to polish your failures to succeed—"

"Spout any of that bullshit from the Dojo and I'll have no qualms in hurling you into the lake."

Asuka snorted, "What, did you lose another match to Izuku?"

Izuku nodded gleefully.

Katsuki scowled, "This is *your* fault, you've corrupted the nerd and now look what he's become!"

"A better fighter than you?" Sana mentioned dryly.

“He’s just more outspoken now, what’s so bad about that?” Asuka added, sliding a hand over Izuku’s shoulder, bringing him away from Katsuki’s shaking. “Our Izuku is more confident because of me, I don’t know why you’re complaining.”

“I ain’t complaining!”

“And the sky is purple.”

“Kappa’s are real.”

“Sharks have Doritos for teeth.”

“Why the fuck do I even hang out with you lot?!”

10th April 3102

It was official. The weapon bindings *hated* her.

Those obnoxious things wouldn’t stop wrapping around herself, and she hadn’t been a very weapon-oriented person in the first place, but who knew taming non-living wraps of bandages was going to be so taxing?

Her father did it as easy as breathing, grinning at her struggle on the ground while she resembled a cat tangled in a ball of yarn. It was the only reason why she went to the training ground alone, at least she could learn it in peace without him goading her into giving up.

To think *he’d think* her reason for giving up would be so shallow.

Pushing aside the gates of her house, she trudged in, stuffing the weapon bindings under her arm. It was given that she had more free time than he did. Teaching from seven to three, that was *if* he didn’t have anything supplementary, nine to three-midnight shifts for hero work, then there was all the report writings, calls from the police stations regarding cases he was involved with, though that had been significantly less ever since he took up the job at U.A.

As for her current priorities, the top one was how to master the weapon bindings and make her side gig *expand* (at Suji&co). Initially, Kozume announcing her the heir to his less-than-rowdy business was mind-boggling *because what kind of person in their right mind would*

hand off such responsibility to a three-year-old?! To placate her, he even quipped that he'd help her adjust, and while everyone else seemed enamored by the verity of how she saved their boss, she wasn't very impressed. Nonetheless, their mindset of what was and what wasn't considered a normal child had helped her in the long run, and now Suji&co was a booming business.

Their notoriety was still very much present, but that was okay because it worked in their favor in certain aspects.

"I'm home." she chimed, slipping off her browned boots.

"Welcome home."

Weapon bindings still under her armpit, she walked over to the dinner table, curiously observing how he studied the papers littered across the table with a jaded look.

"Is something wrong?" she asked, peeking at the papers.

He sighed, "This case," he handed her a beige file, "it's been two weeks since this kid's disappearance, but it's a dead end no matter where we look."

Asuka studied the file, *Sugimoto Hibiki* filled in where the name is, and he was the same age as her. He was pretty, she distinguished, the kind of pretty Haku had. On the next page, she finds the case details that depict that Hibiki hadn't come home from his art class that day, and no ransom calls were made even after two days of his disappearance.

"That's not the only case," he divulged, massaging his neck, "Adachi Hiromu, Baisho Itsuki, Gomi Sakae, Hamanaka Yu, Hidaka Teru— all of them have similar patterns about their disappearances, and we can't find a single clue as to what happened."

She kept the file on the table, "Is there a pattern in the victims? Like certain quirk types, features, characteristics, anything noteworthy?"

He rubbed his eyes, "The quirks are random at best, and the only notable thing that connects them is that they're... aesthetically pleasing." he blinked a couple of times to reorientate himself, "which brings me to a terrible conclusion."

Her head tilted. *Sex-trafficking?* "I'll ask Haruto-san." she imparted, "Maybe he might know something." and she turned, slumping the bindings on a chair.

"Where are you going?" he queried.

"To Suji," she answered over her shoulders, tightening her ponytail.

"Just ask over the phone!" his voice echoed.

"I have proposals to review!"

"How old are you again?!"

"Nine and twenty-nine, you can choose whichever!"

Then she heard footsteps behind her, "I'm coming too!"

*

Shota had visited this blinding abode once. It was the time Asuka introduced her *godfather* to him, and at that time Shota wanted to shake this man and ask him whether he was in the right fucking mind to let a child run a business entity such as *this*.

"Papa-chan!" Kozume squealed, waving his hands zealously, prancing over from his seat to where Shota stood. "What brings you here? Do you want a loan? I can give you money for *free* ." he opened his mouth, and Kozume lifted a finger to silence him, "And if you don't like free things," he whispered, "I'll give a family discount, 0.2% interest rate, no, 0.001%—"

"I'm not here for—"

"ASUKA-CHAN, YOU'RE HERE TOO?!" and then he was off, leaping to where Asuka sat hunched over a stack of files, leaving Shota momentarily deaf.

He sighed, sipping on the coffee he was given. Asuka mentioned Haruto would be with him in a while as she stalked off to do *work* , and he was left in the care of Jin, a man with a mutant elephant quirk who'd reach the ceiling if not for the ceiling being at the height that it was, and also the company *chef* .

He was honestly too baffled to ask why the fuck a loaning company needed a chef.

"You're wondering why a loaning company needs a chef?" Jin voiced, giving him a toothy grin.

Shota nearly choked.

The elephantine man laughed, sending a mini tremor that no one appeared to mind.

"It's alright, I'd be curious too if I were you." Jin said, "Asuka-sama, she gave me this job."

He figured.

"I'm not particularly good at anything, you know?" Jin elaborated, "My fingers don't let me do any delicate tasks, and I'm big enough to be a nuisance, then there's this mutant quirk I've been cursed with." Shota wanted to say something, but the light-hearted air surrounding Jin suggested that the curse part didn't affect him nearly as much as his word choice.

"When I first left the countryside to venture into the big city, I thought things would be different here, you know? But it was the same thing. I wasn't looked upon kindly, I struggled with making ends meet, and the looks people gave were still unnerving— it was this whole process all over again." Jin still wore a smile, a smile that made Shota discomfited. It was no surprise that there was discrimination against the quirkless, and one would think *having* a quirk would dissolve such bias. He was aware of such circumstances, but meeting ones who faced such woes and hearing their parts still left a bad taste in his mouth.

"Then one day, Haruto-sama offered me a job," he continued, "Didn't like it all that much; to hurt people, scaring them into paying their dues, I didn't find joy in doing something like that, but it paid well enough, and I gained a stable standing in this cut-throat world, finally had enough to *eat* . Gained friends," his eyes glittered when he said that, "friends similar to *me* . "

"But one day, the management changed." Shota sipped on his coffee, not missing the way Jin glowed, "Asuka-sama was named Kozume-sama's heir, and shortly after, she started implementing changes." he laughed, producing rumbles around, "Oh kami, it was hilarious to see, but Kozume-sama was so firm on the idea, and she scowled around, complaining to Haruto-sama about whether he had a loose screw."

That Shota could agree on.

“Finally though, when Asuka-sama came around, we all thought we were going to lose our job, but, of course, nothing like that happened.”

Judging from how homey this place was, even he could deduce that much.

“You see, Shota-sama—” nearly half an hour into coming here and he hadn't been able to stop Jin from addressing him so *formally*. “Tsuji is a gang made up of misfits, oddballs, rebels, and anyone who doesn't fit within the societal norms. Asuka-sama, she regrouped our sub-sect at Hagane warehouse, shuffled the whole gang, turned us upside down, and then suddenly, she was giving me a custom-made kitchen.” he discerned how the man's beady eyes turned glassy, his trump twitching with a sniff.

“It's not only me,” Jin carried on, “Shion and Tala, both of them were among the earliest recruits at Hagane, and they got their workshop where they make custom-made furniture for everyone working here, Jomae got his own space to do gardening,” he pointed at the nearest cubicle, “those roses are from him, and I get plenty of my ingredients from him. Nao used to be a lawyer before he got involved with some bad crowd and ended up losing his voice, but Asuka-sama healed him and now he's the company lawyer. Kazu, who used to patch up everyone after we got into nasty brawls, was sent to medical school—you should've *seen* how he cried. His family was poor so he dropped out of high school, but the kid's always been a bright one. Don't know how Asuka-sama does it, but she somehow knows what's going on with *everyone* .”

Jin chuckled fondly, “There's also the dormitory she built too, most of us don't have anywhere to return, so it's pretty cozy there.”

“Kozume-sama is a good boss, but Asuka-sama is the best I've had.” Jin imparted, “And *because* she's such a remarkable one, our family's been growing.” he looked over to the table Asuka was working on, Shota's gaze followed, both of them witnessing Kozume's mouth move incessantly while Asuka flipped over a file, her face amazingly blank. “I've heard that Tsuji is expanding to new fields, doing investments and whatnot. Don't know much about the business shenanigans, but Asuka-sama has been working hard. She's even a frequent presence here now.”

“She wasn't before?” Shota queried, didn't she have clones to do her bidding?

Jin shook his head, his gaze meeting Shota's, "Asuka-sama used to hand over instructions to Michi-kun, her assistant, and she dropped in once or twice a week to check over things. I'm in charge of the kitchen, so I make sure to cook for her every time she comes over."

Gratitude fills his chest. "Thank you for taking care of her."

Jin glowed, "I should be the one thanking you, Shota-sama, for bringing up such an outstanding child."

His nape warmed as he offered the other a small smile. Shota brought up Asuka, that much was true, but he didn't make her into what she was. He didn't contribute to any of the incredible things she managed to achieve; reforming a gang, providing a sanctuary for all those that couldn't find one, utilizing talents and resources to their finest, gaining the loyalty of hundreds of people— it was all amazing and nothing he had ever imagined when she had told him off being involved in a notoriously known gang.

"Ah, Haruto-sama is here," Jin announced, kicking him out of his head, "I'll leave you be then, don't hesitate to tell me what you need." Then he was gone, trudging back into the other side of the kitchen.

"Shota-sama."

He could *not* get used to this.

"I'm sorry it took so long," Haruto said, handing him a thick dossier, "this is what I could compile according to your Intel."

Long?

"I've heard talks of 'ripe goods' being available at the black market." the older man started.

Unlike Kozume with his flamboyant style of clothing that entailed bold printed shirts and khaki pants no matter the weather, his flaming orange hair like a mop on his head, a childish face, and playful teal eyes, Haruto was suited up with no visible crease on his clothes, lime green hair neatly combed like Best Jeanist, face cleanly shaven and wrinkly around mature olive eyes. "At first I heard about the exchange from Satsuki, a higher-up in the Sumire crew," he clarified, "he's well known for being all bark and no bite, plus we don't meddle into other crowds unless they directly aggravate us."

Shota frowned. They heard about children being sexually exploited

and they didn't get involved because it didn't affect them?

"Well, at least not on the surface." Haruto added, smiling, "Asuka-sama has clear orders on, quote on quote, *being nosy about anything unethical*. Additionally, she even has a whole dossier compiled just in case our definitions might not match hers. The Tsuji Corruption Union handles cases on such matters, and we've been following the case for months now, but Sumire has been subtle about who they exchange the 'ripe goods' with. Lucky for you, Shota-sama, we've received a tip. The time and location are included in the file, though I do implore that you break this news to your colleagues in a smart manner, we can't have the TCU under police scrutiny."

The real question was, why wasn't the Tsuji Corruption Union *already* under police scrutiny? Not that the answer mattered. Their versatility with the law had just helped him free children, and he most certainly wasn't going to look a gift horse in the mouth.

"Thank you." he expressed, his hold firm on the file.

"It's no problem." Haruto grinned, quite widely too as his eyes crinkled at the corner. "Asuka-sama's family is our family, in the future, whenever you need help, please refer to us." he slipped out a bronze card from his suit, handing it to Shota, "I know you might hesitate because of your occupation, but with the way Asuka-sama is..." he trailed off, eyes lingering behind him, Shota shifted in his seat, following his gaze. This time, Kozume was squealing, and Asuka's foot was against the young man's face while she spouted something, and with the distance they were at, it wasn't audible. "Looks like Kozume-sama angered her again."

Yeah, looks like it.

"I'll go rectify that, you can review the file for the time being." Haruto departed, dipping his head at Shota despite his discomfort, striding across the other end of the room where Asuka and her godfather were squabbling.

13th April 3102

Public transportation was always mayhem, but on a Saturday afternoon the day before school commenced, it amplified.

"I get that your age is going to be kept a secret," her father murmured from beside her, "But I don't think any middle schoolers have teeth falling out at this age."

She smirked, "That can be easily taken care of by a simple henge."

"That works on teeth too?"

She gave an affirmative nod, "Even a minor genjutsu would do the trick." the bus squealed, a large hiss produced as the doors opened. Asuka slid off first, pushed along the crowd exiting the vehicle, her father was right behind her, arms firm on her shoulders because being a doctor that studied under the great Slug Princess and having the most intricate control over her limbs *then* didn't stop the current body she was inhabiting to trip over her own feet.

They stepped off the bus and trudged along the sidewalk, him walking behind her. They needed to buy a lot considering the pantry needed restocking, and her stationery supplies were almost diminished from all the experimenting she committed herself to.

To her absolute bafflement and joy, *seals could be used by people other than her* . Well, not in the exact way she desired, but it worked nonetheless.

That worked?" he asked, eyebrows scrunched.

With a gaping mouth, she nodded.

Silence etched for a moment, both of them waiting for something. For the former it was a sign of the tracking device working as Asuka depicted it did, for the latter it was the venture of something detonating.

"I don't feel any different."

"Uh, try activating your quirk," she said, then decided that the tree might blow up any given moment with that specific instruction, and yanked him by his shirt to a safe distance while he appeared considerably dizzy.

"Couldn't have given me a warning?" he grunted, blinking rapidly.

She gave a sheepish smile.

He flared his quirk, and Asuka waited with bated breath.

"...nothing's happening."

"No visible string of chakra trying to connect with yours?" she asked, disappointed.

"Nothing out of the ordinary."

"No weird tugging from your belly?"

"No."

"No special colors?"

"None that I can see."

She hummed, "I see."

His quirk went slack, grey eyes focusing on her, "So, what just happened?"

Well, she supposed this was kind of expected. It was just as they didn't see the mint glow of her healing chakra, didn't see the way her hands beamed when laced with her chakra scalp, and didn't witness anything abnormal. "The seal activated when you flared your chakra, your quirk." she explained, still scrutinizing the tree, "And that's normal I suppose, that's how seals work, but I was hoping you'd reap the full benefits along with it, the problem is, you aren't able to see what I see."

"And when I activate my quirk," her eyes glowed and hair moved erratically, "I don't see the connection joining to my quirk because you're the one who initiated the sequence."

"So it's no use even if I activate it," he stated, peering at the tree.

She nodded, producing a mystic palm, "if you can't see this," she said, showing him her palm, "then I doubt you can see that. Probably has to do with how I can't perform elemental techniques; it goes against the flux of this world."

"Then," he turned, facing her green orbs, "have you tried using a medium?"

"A medium?" she tilted her head.

"As yourself," he clarified.

She blinked, "I've...never thought of that."

Suffice to say, his suggestion worked.

Grinning to herself, she grabbed two bottles of jumbo ink, a pack of

calligraphy brushes, and a bundle of paper. Selecting everything she needed, her feet carried her back to the confectionery section where her father was shopping. And he wasn't alone.

" *Ara ara* , who is this? My future daughter?"

Her mouth twitched, having a hard time deciding on a smile or a scowl. It settled on a tight-lipped smile. "Ms. Joke." she acknowledged.

The woman pouted, " *Mou* , don't be so formal!"

"Papa I think I forgot something back at the—" *her tolerance* ,
"stationery aisle. I'll come back in a decade or so."

The mint-haired hero started cackling. And her father's lips kept twitching imperceptibly.

"Goodness, she's the cutest thing I've ever encountered!" The Smile hero wheezed, hands wrapping around her abdomen. One would think she was using her quirk on herself.

"Stop teasing her." her father cut in, his face oddly mirthful as he crossed the distance and took the basket off her hand.

"Right, right," she bobbed her head, "I'll leave you be." then she turned around to leave, only to whip her head back once more, throwing a wink at her father, "Don't forget our date tonight!"

"I never agreed."

"So you're going to leave me stranded?!"

He rolled his eyes this time, beckoning the cart forward. Asuka, with her inherited pettiness, stuck her tongue out at the infernal woman before following her father.

"You try to set me up with anyone you can find, but draw the line at Fukukado?" the amusement in his tone wasn't unmissed.

She huffed, matching his steps, "My soul just repels her, it's not my fault." eyes avoided his probably *I-know-that's-bullshit* Look, "But if you *happened* to like her, then I'll...compromise."

He snorted, "Yeah, sure."

Soon they checked out and left the store with hands full of bags, and

having decided on eating out since tomorrow was going to be a *special* occasion, they halted at the stop light opposite an ostentatious yakiniku place, waiting for the light to turn green.

Then a loud crack ripped through the air, followed by an ear-grating shriek, and her arm was pulled back, her father shielding her from whatever danger everyone else near the vicinity was crouching and screaming at.

Her eyes trailed the source, scrutinizing the building adjacent to them, observing how glass rained down on the concrete. Murmurs rose, hands pointing at the building with a wardrobe-sized hole, soon after, something shot out, and apprehension among the crowd accentuated.

She, though, looked at the cause of mayhem with unperturbed eyes. Was this idiot committing an act of robbery in broad daylight without an ounce of article to cover his stupidly self-satisfied face?

Said robber hung in the air, bat-like wings flapping as he shifted his bags which spilled out notes of cash. "Can't you use your quirk on him?" she questioned.

She didn't have to see the incredulous look on his face to know his response. "That might kill him."

Right, killing. There was that too.

"Then are you going to do nothing?" she quipped back, seeing how the man was done zipping up his bag, readying to take off into the horizon.

He huffed, rustling around the bags he was holding, taking out a can of tuna.

"Yeah, like throwing *that* would totally leave him unharmed and not with a possible concussion or the *possibility* of him not being able to ground himself, and fall to his *possible* death."

He ignored her, getting into a stance. Then punted the thing at the unsuspecting man, except it didn't hover anywhere near his head, it landed on his hand.

Wow.

Stings of curses escaped from the man, his beady black eyes glaring at her father before he dived for his bag, though the bag flew away from

his reach with a rather intense gust of wind, "Well, looks like I won't need to do anything."

She bobbed her head.

"I AM HERE!"

*

"Damn, his quirk...it's like nothing I've ever seen before."

He whacked her head with a stalk of leeks, "Stop using your quirk in public."

Her lips tugged to a smug smile, "Having double standards now, are we?"

"You're the last person who should be saying that." he retorted, stuffing his leeks back into the bag.

She huffed, "It's for the greater good."

"That's how all vigilantes start."

"Oh, that one's new." she adjusted her bags, "I've upgraded from a *criminal* to a *vigilante* ."

He snorted, "You do realize most of what you get up to in your *business empire* is technically illegal."

"Says who?" she jutted defiantly.

"The law."

"Well, you're not doing a very good job at following them either, now are you?" she grinned up at him.

"Ah, are you the brave young man who threw this canned seafood at the villain?" a deep voice resounded?

Canned seafood?

His daughter beside him snorted. "That would be me. I threw the

canned seafood ."

All Might seemed quite oblivious to his sarcasm while handing him the can.

Asuka dipped her head at the towering man. "May I have your autograph?"

"Of course!" the blinding man boomed. Shota never had many interactions with All Might, which was completely given since both of them were on opposite sides of a metaphorical scale. And now that he met him, he still wanted to stay, far, far away from the walking magnet of human interaction.

She searched inside her bag, slipping out two papers and a pen, "Thank you!"

The Symbol of Peace grinned while proceeding to do a signature that managed to fill the whole paper.

Then they were off, or more like *pushed off* by a mob of his fans, and both he and Asuka crossed the road, entering the Yakiniku place as they initially planned. Choosing a window seat, they stacked the bags of purchase to the side. "You know, it's the first time I've seen such a marbled core like All Might's, I just thought he had a normal power-type quirk."

Marbled core? His hand traveled to a jug of water in the middle, "I thought only elemental types had colors."

She wagged her finger at him, "Nuh-uh, even non-elementals have color." He pushed the first glass he filled towards her, then continued filling the other, "We both have white. Kayama-oba has a light purple, Sana-chan has ivory, but All Might's chakra core isn't like anything I've seen before, it's like... like a rainbow?"

Right, Asuka had filled him in with most of the *chakra* workings, but he hadn't grasped it all that well with how simultaneous and mind-throbbing the information seemed to be.

"Most enhancement types just have blue." she continued, tilting her head on the window. Shota looks outside, seeing the crowd surrounding the blond hero. "Then again, he is the Symbol of Peace."

Before he could retort, a waiter appeared at the table, beaming a smile as she enunciated pleasantries and handed off menus, though they

didn't need that long to decide, and Asuka recited the order for the both of them.

After the waiter left, he watched as she peeked out the window again, and she was visibly frustrated upon All Might's disappearance from the crowd.

"You aren't thinking of doing anything illegal, are you? Because breaking into the number one hero's house *is* illegal, hacking into people's personal information *is* illegal, getting your group of budgies to track down—"

"Okay first," she cut in, "It's TCU, and they do *perfectly* good work. Secondly, *just what do you take me for?* I'm not intrigued enough that I'd pull something like that. His quirk is unique enough, but it's the first mix of colors I've seen other than those diabolical things in All for One's laboratory."

"Won't Izuku and Katsuki know more about All Might?"

She sighed, "I've heard them speak of the topic more than once, apparently All Might's quirk hasn't been named, and he just diverts any question regarding the topic. People just *assume* it's an enhancement type, which isn't *wrong*, but it's not exactly right either."

"Well, as you said," he scratched his stubble, "he *is* the Symbol of Peace, no normal Joe can climb to that position. You have to have something special to achieve that standing."

She glared at that. He understood why.

"I'm not discriminating," he said, and he wasn't. Asuka often said quirks didn't make a hero; he agreed. Quirks *didn't* make heroes. But that factor was damn well potent.

Her eyebrows straightened, "Alright, I understand what you're trying to say, but his quirk still bugs me!"

28th April 3102

"Hey, you there, yes you—"

The people in middle school were...tall.

“It’s Aizawa Asuka.”

It was expected though, which didn't make her any less irked.

“Ah, sorry, Aizawa-san.”

Because of a few technicalities with her paperwork, her admission got delayed by quite a bit, and that meant she missed the most important part of any first-year middle schooler’s life; *The Slotting* .

Well, at least that’s what Sana called it.

That brought her to another point; missing the typical first day meant she wouldn't have any friends, and she'd categorize herself as a pretty social person, but the looming towers did piss her off more than she should've been, which ultimately led her wearing a poker face, and warding off any potential amenity.

One would think the poker face would've done the trick until she was ready to accept her growth *would be slow because she was still nine years old*.

Wrong.

“I’m the vice rep, Ikari Heisuke,” The tall, tall boy amongst the many tall towers said, fluttering his pretty pink lashes while offering a business smile. “I’m afraid you have violated the school dress code, Aizawa-san, a necktie is a quintessential part of our uniform, though since it is your first time, I’m not going to report it, but do remember to wear it tomorrow, alright?”

“No.”

“I’m sorry?”

“I said no,” she repeated, and he was taken aback.

Smoothing over his shirt, he pulled his back and stood straighter as if to intimidate her. “It’s not a matter of choice,” he pronounced, eyes slightly narrowed.

She huffed, massaging her neck from craning to look up at the sky tower, “I’m not wearing a leash.”

Who is he to force her to wear an infernal tie? Did he realize how

dangerous those were in a fight?!

Why is fighting the only thing in your head?

And you're just a saint, aren't you?

Yes.

What? You're not hiding this time?

.....

You're impossible.

"Excuse me?"

"Necktie. *Leash* ." she clarified.

The vice rep seems to go red at her justification, the angry kind of red.
"Are you aware that I can write you up for this?"

And she could very well choke him with the tie that he seemed to be *oh-so* fond of. Instead, she offered him a smile, "Well, I very well can't have that now, can I?" she said, tone dipped in chocolate and smothered in sprinkles, "I'll be sure to wear the leas— tie tomorrow."

"Alright," he said, staring intensely.

The next day she wore a genjutsu to formulate the lack of a leash.

"I thought I gave you a warning," he said, eyebrows twitching imperceptibly.

"Huh?"

"Oi, cut her some slack, she's wearing her tie, why does it matter that it's loosened like that?" her seatmate Riko voiced, poking her head out of the sketchbook she always seemed to be buried in.

"What?" Heisuke blurted, "She's not wearing one." He points to her neck where a tie is void.

Asuka doesn't know whether to laugh or gape.

"Ikari-kun," A student behind her perked up, "you shouldn't pick on the new kid like this." she chided.

Heisuke's brows furrowed and when he initiated to open his mouth, she hopped off her seat, fisting the back of his shirt as she dragged him out of the classroom. It garnered attention, but she had more important things to dwell on other than the bustling remarks of *why poor Ikari-kun was being pulled around by a chibi*.

She only listened to his shouts to stop dragging him only after closing an empty club room, folding her arms while he loomed at her. "What the hell is wrong with you?!"

She scowled, "What do you mean you can't see my tie?"

It shouldn't have been possible.

"Literally what I just said?" he snapped back, though contrary to his tone, he took two steps away from her.

"What about my teeth?" she demanded, "Is my canine missing?"

He blinked, "...yes?"

It was a quirk. It *should* be a quirk. No normal person should've been able to see through a genjutsu. "What's your quirk?"

"Why do *you* want to know?" he retorted, smoothing over his shirt. "You know, you're acting really weird. I haven't done anything to warrant such behavior from you, I only asked you to wear a tie, to *adhere* to the dress code— are you using your quirk right now?! Should I write you up for illegal quirk usage?!—"

His core buzzed with teal, which meant Heisuke had an elemental quirk. A water-related quirk.

"Shut up, will you? I'm trying to figure out something here!"

"I'm the one who should shut up? You're the one who embarrassed me, hauled me out of the classroom, and then used your quirk on me after demanding what my quirk was!"

Maybe he's just not receptive to genjutsu .

.... ..you're telling me I can gamble at bars, explore the black market, roam through streets I'm not supposed to be in, soothe out gang conflict — and this Walking, Talking Rule Book is the only single entity in the whole of fucking Japan to be resistant to genjutsu?!

I assume so .

Her hand almost detoured to pull at her immaculate (and onerous to compose) French braid, but she exhaled instead, “You’re right, scream all you want here, I’m going back to class.” So what if he was a rare gem who was unresponsive to genjutsu? He could only grit his teeth for outer-space to hear and tolerate her transgressing his precious dress code for the rest of the school year.

And maybe if she was feeling generous enough, she might even try and use him to test out the limitations of this world, but seeing his lavender eyes blazing, and sharp jaw clenching and unclenching, her generosity shut the door, and put a nail in the keyhole.

“Come back here! Where the hell do you think you’re going?! I need an explan—”

She shut the door, flash-stepping across the hallway.

I think you’ll be having a very interesting school year.

Yes, very interesting when you’ve spoken more than five words.

....

I see this is how you’re going to play.

....

Well, fuck you too, Inner.

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Chapter End Notes

I AM BAcK after a month of disappearance ahahaha. Honestly, I don't think I should be taking breaks because it takes so damn long to get back into the same mood. Another reason why it took so long to update was because I HATED my first draft and it had to go through some pretty heavy editing 🐼

But anywaysss, hope this was enjoyable for you all, and do tell what you think of this chapter, comments and reviews are always

a bliss to read!

Like I said before, It'll be a few chapters more and we'll be doing a lil time skip to when she's in 3A, so pertaining to this point, the coming chapter will have rapid age growth!!

Many thanks for the continuous support for this fic; the kudos, subscriptions, hits, bookmarks, especially the little notes some y'all write when bookmarking > < , it all brightens my day!

If any of you want to reach out to me, here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)
List of OC's

Aizawa Kazue- Shota's mom

Ehara Sana- Asuka's bff

Ehara Rumi- Sana's mom

Ehara Suki- Sana's bro

Yamada Seiya- Kayama&Hizashi's son

Sugimoto Hibiki, Adachi Hiromu, Baisho Itsuki, Gomi Sakae,
Hamanaka Yu, Hidaka Teru— kids from the kidnapping case.

Kozume- supplier/godfather

Haruto, Jin, Shion, Tala, Jomae, Nao, Kazu, Michi— ppl from
Suji&co

Satsuki- dude from Sumire (gang)


Ikari Heisuke- class vice rep

Riko- seatmate

Hope this was a good read!

Eradication

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to Grig9700 for beta reading 

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

19th May 3102

Most of middle school was much less eventful than elementary school. At least there it was lively with both Izuku and Katsuki despite them being a year above her, not to mention Sana achieved to get into plenty of jocular situations with her unique temperament. Here though, weeks into middle school, she was *bored*.

There wasn't anything much to do, just a whole cycle of repetition; ditching rush hour by waking up early, most mornings in which she woke to train with the bindings that still very much despised her. After that, she slept through until the class got rowdy and her seatmate nudged her awake. She didn't struggle in many classes, but English was a period she didn't sleep through.

Making friends here wasn't much of a thing, and it was for considerably palpable reasons too, that being how most of them— a vast majority of the girls at least— were only interested in boys, which was shallow of her to categorize them based on that alone, but she didn't need to do a double take on her stance due to how rabid most of them were at using their gem-like *Heisuke-kun* to wax the floor. As for the male population of the class, they actively avoided her after the spectacle of dragging the class vice rep like a mop.

This didn't mean she was an anti-social cocoon. Asuka did have people she was on speaking terms with, like Riko, the one who was always drawing, her seatmate. Kayo was on friendly terms with everyone. Takemi, the class rep. Heisuke— in this obedient dog's case, it was more of his insistent barking of how she managed to violate the school dress code whenever no one was within the vicinity because evidently, he was *still* wary of how she was capable of dragging him into an

empty club room. Oddly enough, it's the only source of entertainment she got.

"Haa?! Did I hear this pipsqueak correctly or are my ears jammed?"

"You think you're some bigshot just 'cos you wearin' that badge?" her ears twitched, chopsticks hovering over golden brown slices of tonkatsu. There were benches fixed near the side of the school building, the same side the gardening club did most of their magic. It's where she frequented to eat lunch in peace, though today, unfortunately enough, the space between the building and the adjoining sports hall is where a crowd of seniors hung around.

She did hear Takemi speak of how the boxing club room had been closed off because of improper conduct and usage of the facility, she just didn't know why they had to relocate to the alleyway near where she ate lunch and squabble with an irately familiar voice.

"Hey Pinky, don't you think you should regard your seniors with more respect? So what if we're letting loose here, does that mean you have to blow our ears out and threaten us by writing us up? Who do you think you are, huh?!"

Said irately familiar voice was well on his way to get a beating of a lifetime, she concluded. Seriously, just what rise did that dumbass get from writing up people all the time? Did he think those overgrown boars would marvel at being told off like his little fan club in class?

"But... but senpai, smoking isn't allowed on school premises!" his voice resounded, irkingly self-effacing. She had to admit though, his drive to stick to the rules was impressive.

"Smoking isn't allowed on school premises — shut the fuck up, you snotty brat, who do you think you're talking to?!"

"N-no matter who I am talking to, rules are rules, I'm going to have to write— AH—"

She groaned, begrudgingly closing her lunch box and settling her chopstick on top of it.

The scene is how she imagined, three boars and a pitiful prey that lay before the feet of a....an un-middle school looking teenager.

"Oi Ikari, sensei is looking for you.... am I interrupting something?" Asuka liked fighting, but she wasn't in the mood to get her hands dirty

when her tonkatsu was still warm in her bento.

“And so another runt joins in.” a lanky boy drawled, crouched on the ground with a cigarette pressed between his lips.

“Uh,” she played dumb, “I don’t know what’s going on here, but sensei mentioned something about a family emergency, so you should probably hurry along.”

Heisuke appeared too dumbstruck to speak, and she presumed it must be from the developing bruise on his jaw.

“Hear that pinky? You got a family emergency.” the other boy, the one who was standing in front of Heisuke, taunted.

Tempted to curse at Heisuke for his lagging, she walked deeper into the alley, pulling his forearm to get him to stand. He stared at her with something akin to shame. She rolled her eyes and pulled him along, guiding his frazzled, *probably the first time being hit* state out of the nasty-smelling alley.

Of course, nothing went that smoothly.

“Did we say you could *leave* ?” a new voice spoke, it was the tallest one of the trio. “Honestly, our kouhai seem to have no respect for us.” he tutted.

“You got that right, spoiled brats the whole lot of them.”

“Pinky didn't even apologize for bothering us!”

Her eyebrows twitched, *keep calm, keep calm, keep calm, for your tonkatsu, keep calm* — “I’ll apologize in his stead,” she said, turning around to offer them an apologetic smile, “Ikari-kun is new to his role so he picks at most things, I’m sure he didn't mean to offend you all. Please forgive him for the inconvenience.” she dipped her head, and forcibly pushed Heisuke’s stunned face downwards to match her actions.

“Hmm, since the doll-face asked us so nicely, I don't think we should refuse.”

“Alright, we’ll let you go,” the Tower who had struck Heisuke boomed, “but for a fee.”

The thread around her patience yanked.

“That’s right.” Lanky bobbed his head, “He cost us precious cigarettes with his foolish rambling, pay up for a new pack, and we’ll let you pass.”

Then it snapped.

“*Pay up and you’ll let us pass?* — and what are you lot supposed to be, fucking bridge trolls?” she snorted, earning many reactions, the most prominent one being from the freshly traumatized human rule book.

“Are you out of your mind?!” he whispered to her. Though from how quiet the surrounding was, the stupefied trio could very well hear him.

She shrugged.

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“Is that how you lost your canine? From getting into...fights?” It’s the first thing Heisuke uttered after she got back to her lunch box, hurrying along because the bell might go off any second.

“As *if* I’d lose a tooth from beating up idiots,” she grumbled back, taking a large bite of her rice, then she passed off her extra peach juice to him, and he took it without complaint.

She swallowed her food, swooping two more slices of tonkatsu with her chopsticks, “I’m nine years old.” Then she stuffed her mouth.

“*What?* ”

“Yeah, big deal.” she said, “Now drink your juice before the bell rings — and y’know maybe next time, try not to pick at delinquents smoking in an alleyway just to preach the school regulations, just eat in the cafeteria like a normal person, alright? Saves a lot of useless violence.”

“You’re nine?!”

“Did you not hear anything I just said?”

“Why is a kid in—”

She cut him off with a glare, “This *kid* just saved your ass from getting butchered.”

Heisuke sighed, “Fair enough.” he opened the packet with the straw, bringing it closer to his lips, “What are you going to do to them now? Don't they have to get treated?”

She shrugged, gathering the remaining rice in her bento, “They aren't going to die so just leave them be.”

He nodded, and there was only silence for a little while before the bell echoed. She closed the bento on time, stuffing it back into her lunch bag, then hopped off the bench to dump the empty juice box into the trash can.

“Aizawa-san.” And for a majority of this whole spectacle, Heisuke's voice had been considerably meek and withdrawn, but this one, in particular, sounded very small. Despite all that he held her gaze when she turned around to regard him. “Thank you for what you did back there. I know, uh, I've been quite hostile towards you for violating the school dress code, and I'm not going to apologize for *that* , but I won't be bothering you anymore.”

How nice of him.

“Sounds good.” she returned, offering a small smile, which he reciprocated with a shaky one. Honestly, that bruise was doing wonders to his handsome face.

When they fell into a sort of hurried steps to reach the class, she yanked his arm so that he'd reach her height, then hovered her palm across his cheek while he floundered about how *inappropriate* she was being.

“I just healed your wound, *you're welcome.* ” she tossed, resuming her steps.

Then he started sputtering about illegal quirk usage, cupping his cheek as he stumbled to follow her.

So much for all the *not bothering* speech he'd given her.

It was a strange notion seeing Katsuki with a serene face, his ruby eyes softened, his jaws unclenched, and his mouth not settled into a scowl that Mitsuki had said was present since the day he was born. And it was even stranger when this bustling ball of energy was holding Yamada Seiya in a firm grip, his body swaying with the light hum he produced, lulling the boy to sleep.

It was a spectacle that managed to baffle her no matter how many times she'd witnessed it.

"You know, some people just have that baby magic. An innate thing and all." Izuku proclaimed from the side, "And if you glare at him too much, he's going to lord it over your head until the end of time."

It was unfair how Seiya was as fussy with her as he was with Hizashi. The boy only had a selected few as his favorites, his mother being on the top of the list, then his maternal grandmother, his father, her father, and fucking Bakugou Katsuki.

"I don't get it." she whispered back, rubbing Oni's belly, "Sei has only seen Katsuki *thrice*, and I've seen him more times than I can count. What does he have that I don't?!"

Izuku smiled, and it was the kind of smile that suggested he wanted to guffaw, "I don't mean to belittle your... troubles, but Kacchan only has a few redeeming qualities, let's let him have this without *anyone* —" his gaze narrowed to Sana sitting opposite to them who was leisurely smoothing over Fergus's back, "teasing him for it."

"I'm a very nice person." Sana said in a monotone.

"To Asuka-chan? I don't doubt that." Izuku returned

It was a frequent thing for Kayama and Hizashi to leave Seiya at the Aizawa household whenever they were off to date nights, but to have her friends staying over this late was rare, though that was only due to last-minute plans concocted by her father because of how he found Sana grocery shopping at the local mart. *Alone*.

And when asked *why* she was out and about at that time of the day, she had casually thrown out that she was making a birthday cake for herself since the one her mom brought home got knocked out by the same person while rushing out the door due to an emergency at the hospital. Naturally, with such a predicament, her father with his

tender tofu heart didn't leave her be, so he invited her over for a sleepover at their house after confirming with Sana's eternally apologetic, and thankful mother that she wouldn't be returning from the hospital anytime soon.

"Oi Time bomb, where am I supposed to keep the kid?" Katsuki asked, nudging her shin with his foot.

She stared up, observing how Seiya had his chubby cheek pressed against Katsuki's shoulder. "Papa's room, the baby camera is there." she let out, then patted Oni one last time before heaving herself up from the floor to guide him there.

"What's up with Ehara?" he questioned out of nowhere, making her halt plugging the baby camera.

She turned, raising a brow at how he was tucking Seiya while having beaming red ears. "What do you mean by that?" she prodded, muting the glee in her tone. Izuku and Katsuki didn't know why they were having such an impromptu sleepover because it wasn't unnatural to have one. More often than not, Katsuki was the host. Izuku's house was a sometimes thing, she tried not to hold any due to the odd things contained in her room, and Sana's place was seldom.

"She's actin' weird," he replied, turning to her with an aloof face, but his ears contradicted.

"She is?"

He rolled his eyes, "Aren't you guys supposed to be best friends?"

Asuka blinked slowly, "Yeah, but what do you mean she's acting weird? She's perfectly fine." she probably wasn't.

He scowled, "Stop messin' with me, that demented gyrater hasn't once quipped an insult at me since I came here with 'zuku, there's somethin' going on with her."

Seems like he has more than just a *few* redeeming qualities .

She almost snorted.

"You're right," she said instead, pushing the plug in and adjusting the camera to where Seiya was. "Her okaa-san's busy today so they couldn't celebrate together, same with her onii-san, his business trip got delayed."

“Oh.”

She looked at him for the vague sound he produced, “Celebrating with family is different than when it's with friends.” she said, turning to leave the room, “Just don't act weird around her, she won't like that.”

* * *

After a feast of Sana's favorite foods, the four friends helped with cleaning up while the only adult arranged the living room into a sleeping space.

“You know what would be faster than this? A fucking snail crossing the Innoshima bridge!”

Sana flicked the foam in her hand, receiving a squawk from the feral blond, “Much like your mental state, that's not a very sound argument.”

“You're real confident for someone who's been scrubbing the same shitting bowl for two hours.” he snapped, zealously drying a bowl.

“This is why you can never win a fight against Asuka-chan.”

“Hah?! What does that have to do with anything?!”

She shrugged, “It doesn't have anything to do with this, I just know it hurts your inflated ego.”

The gritting of his teeth could be heard from miles away.

Asuka rolled her eyes at the spectacle, “Just switch places if you're so bothered by her speed.”

“Kacchan doesn't clean dishes well,” Izuku quipped, closing off the container holding leftover fish and chips.

“It was just one- *fucking*- time and I was six!” Katsuki bellowed.

Asuka snorted, “Yeah Izuku, he was *six* , you shouldn't blame the kid for using ketchup as dish soap, it's a *perfectly* honest mistake.”

“That's just stupid,” Sana taunted.

“Actually,” Izuku chimed in, “Kacchan was recovering from a cold

then, so it was an honest mistake.”

Ah, ever the loyal Izuku.

Before Katsuki could yell out his choice of obscenity, her father walked into the kitchen, “I’ve set the baths,” he announced, then made gestures from his hand that meant to get out of his kitchen.

She and Sana entered her room which needed considerable cleaning. Ever since she started on her seal works, her father opted to stay out of her room until there was an *absolute* need after an incident with half her bookshelf blowing up. Suffice to say now she had to oust the trash and laundry by herself, and that was too much of a chore.

She shoved away the things littering the floor with her foot, guiding Sana just in case she might have missed a defective seal.

“Should I help you clean?” Sana voiced.

A nervous laugh escaped her throat while opening the bathroom door.

“It’s alright, Asuka-chan, I understand that school must be taking a toll on you, Kaa-san also tends to get messy when she’s stressed,” she said, pulling off her shirt effortlessly.

Asuka stripped her pants, tossing them out into the almost spilling laundry basket, mentally noting to take them out by tonight. “I’m fine, tomorrow’s Saturday anyways, I’ll clean then.” she waved off, taking off her top.

Sana left it at that.

They spent a good half an hour in the bath before getting out, mostly due to Sana insisting on giving her a scalp massage, only to get herself tangled in her unruly hair. By the time they joined the boys in the living room, Katsuki had smugly declared that latecomers had no say in the movie they were going to watch, which none of the two minded.

Halfway through the movie, Izuku had curled into a perfect ball, sticking close to the foot of the single sofa, Katsuki had sprawled himself wide enough that he was more on Sana’s futon than his, and Sana wasn’t even in her futon, cuddling near her, hands draped across her abdomen and face buried into her stomach. Asuka’s hand smoothed over the light oak-colored hair, cheek squished against the

two-seater sofa she was leaning against as she took in the placid scene before her.

Sometimes she wondered why she was so attached to these three in particular. It wasn't like they held any major semblance to her deceased friends. Though Inner had always interrupted her thought process to chide her about how people shouldn't have to bear resemblance to their *dead friends* to make them any more likable because that just might lead to some more unhealthy coping mechanisms— which she just ignored because Inner said plethora of annoying, eccentric things before burrowing into the same hole she crawled out of.

She heard rustling, watching Izuku uncurl from his position, eyes fluttering open, then abruptly shutting them due to the intensity from the screen, “Suka-cha, whersh my blanjet?” he mumbled, hand grasping on open air.

“Feeling cold?” she asked the obvious, a smile tugging at how he still refused to open his eyes as he nodded slowly.

Technically she could crawl over and cover the blanket over him, though that would mean moving, and Sana wouldn't let her, “Come over here.” she offered.

Wordlessly, he clambered over to her like a hermit, elbowing Katsuki in the process as the blond yelped, his sprawled foot narrowly clashing with the greenette's shoulder. When he fitted into the space between both Sana and Katsuki, she pulled the fluffy blanket over him while he mumbled something under his breath.

Two minutes later she switched off the tv, sliding down on her pillow to sleep.

5th December 3102

Kozume had a very clear attitude on pint-sized things normal people referred to as ‘children’.

And that particular attitude was to avoid them.

When he was eight and his half-sister was three, it was the first time

they met. That meeting didn't even take ten minutes to curl into a nice pile of shit because the kid had wanted to play ball and didn't dare to catch properly, and suddenly, he had a stinging cheek and an even more scathing look from his stepmother.

Then he got a black eye from a baby because the kid wielded his rattle like a hammer.

Even unborn parasites weren't excluded. Some woman's husband was positively ready to castrate him when he accidentally happened to bump into his wife while running an errand for his father.

So Kozume thought it was right to assume that avoiding those innocent-faced gremlins was the right thing to do.

This was all, of course, before he met his goddaughter.

“Seriously? You’re wearing that?!”

His life-long debtor.

“It’s a formal meeting, do you *want* to lose our potential investors by staining their eyes with that morbid shirt?! Where do you even buy those?!”

His heir.

Actually , making her his heir wasn't even intended. It was just something he had spouted off to rile her, and his comrades were easily supportive of anything and everything save for a limited few. Haruto called them the ones with *brains* . He liked to call them cynics. Albeit he was somewhat taken back that she started implementing changes that he hadn't ever thought of making— the majority of which included transforming his business into something *legal* , but she made up for that by creating the Corruption Union.

“Asuka-sama, you need not worry, I have prepared Kozume-sama’s attire for the meeting.”

For all the things that she did, it made him curious. Curious enough that he ran a background check just to make sure his Peridot wasn't being subjected to any kind of behavior that warranted such maturity and oddness she displayed.

She wasn't.

Her papa was a perfectly good man. A hero. And he treated her sons better than how he had been treated by his family.

“Thanks, Michi.”

Strangely enough, he concluded that she *wasn't* a child. Which she *was*, in terms of appearance at least.

But that didn't explain how this child didn't force him to use his child repellent.

It also didn't explain why she sometimes had the eyes of an old aged man. Something like *his* old man.

“Mou, Asuka-chan, it hurts me to see that you have so little faith in me, why would I sabotage your plans like that?”

In the end, he decided that he didn't care. From the moment he laid eyes on her after waking from a near-death experience, he had formed an affection for her. Mind you, it was purely platonic and nothing of what Haruto used to hint on. Apparently spending his day thinking about his angel was *creepy*. He digressed. It just showed how much love he held for her.

And despite how she scowled and kicked at him for being annoying, he was sure she shared the sentiment.

“I don't see why you *wouldn't* seeing how you've been goading the Sumire gang. What part of us being neutral don't you understand?”

Peridot also had lots of odd requests, unique talents, and blood of steel. She could heal, kick imbeciles hard enough to dent walls, had high intelligence, was oddly fond of gambling and bets, and didn't flinch at violence. He clearly remembered that trip where both of them went hunting for some herb she was in search of because she said he wasn't ‘careful’ enough with her plants— she liked to pull that over his head after that one time he stepped on some rare ingredient that was going to make Papa-chan's eyes better.

Okay, maybe it wasn't once.

Anyways, when they were returning from the trip, some dickwad had been in the middle of assaulting a woman. And while Kozume was ready to flare his quirk and give the moron a fever that was sure to overcook his enzymes, his Peridot had rammed the unsuspecting head into the wall, blood spraying her face and staining her hand, knocking

him out clean.

Or he had *assumed* the other to be dead, but his chest was rising imperceptibly so there was that.

“But I can’t help it! They’re just so.. so, annoying, you know? Just grinds my gears whenever I see their ugly mugs.”

He had even wanted to adopt her at some point, and Haruto being the fly in his ointment pronounced that wasn't a very good idea. As if that old fart had any good idea in the first place, he was only ever good for coaxing him to go back home after he *‘ran away from the responsibility he was born with’*, Kozume called it bullshit. He wasn't going back home. It's the reason he created Tsujisuji in the first place.

He was eternally grateful that she was spending more time with him. Previously when she yanked his ear and told him about keeping himself hidden from her family. Her father. He’d been hurt.

Like, *really* hurt.

“Gah! Stop spouting nonsense and go get ready!”

He was, even more, hurt when he was forced to stay put when they received news of her being sent to the hospital, only allowing himself to send her books. His Peridot adored books.

“Alright, alright, I’m leaving, just wait and see my little Peridot, I’m going to bag so many investors you’ll be crying for joy~”

Ultimately, she was the one who announced that her father was coming to meet him. And *boy* was that grouchy man *cute*. He could see where his Peridot got her attitude from.

Her papa glared at him for quite sometime after that, but a lot of people liked to glare at him. He liked to think it was his face. He *was* quite handsome.

“I doubt that.”

8th January 3103

When she was Haruno Sakura, puberty hit her *late*.

Later than her most of her female friends at least.

Ino got it when she was eleven, Hinata when she was nine, Tenten got it at twelve, and she, with her stick figure and lemon for boobs got it two weeks before she turned fourteen.

Ultimately, she was grateful despite all her internal anguish about not being womanly enough. While Ino moaned about her period pains like a kunai carving her uterus, Sakura laughed it off because her cycle only lasted five days, and the most severe pain she experienced was a headache.

And when Hinata used to bustle around the hospital with a taut face that succeeded in doing its job to shoo away any potential amenity despite the amiable heir that she was, Sakura experienced cravings rather than mood swings.

Tenten screeched about her acne, urging her to make tonics and creams for her face, Sakura's dilemma extended to being fatigued at best.

Laughably enough, they were all bitter about it, and Ino and Tenten in particular liked to jab at her lacking figure to make up for her somewhat blissful menstruation. Though even *that* stopped bothering her at some point after she got together with Shikamaru. Lucky for her, his choice of physical attribute that he found most appealing in a woman happened to be the only thing she *had* , which were—

“ *Those* are atrocious.”

“Oh come on, they aren't *that* bad, bright colors go perfectly well with your skin tone.”

“Kayama-oba, I'm *not* wearing neon yellow *anything* , and I don't have to look good in training bras, who's going to see them anyways?”

Contrary to her previous life, she had started developing breasts at the tender age of nine, and not to anyone's knowledge, started purchasing her selection of undergarments during the same time around, that fact though, didn't hinder Kayama from taking notice of it after almost two years into her development, thus her current predicament of going bra shopping because in her words, quote on quote: *If not with me, then who? Your papa?!*

“ *You* are going to see them.” Kayama juttet, putting the blinding thing back where it was.

She shrugged, "I already have some basic black ones at home, I don't need anything else."

" *What?* "

A lot of time could have been saved if only Kayama had *listened* to her before dragging her out of her home and vaguely declaring to her father about how they were going *shopping for your growing daughter, you unobservant grouch!*

"Shota actually had the sense to buy... he... *what?* "

She grinned, eyes catching a maroon bralette, "Oh no, papa doesn't know anything. Until recently, he just thought my training bras were normal tops that I wear on the inside whenever I'm training or exercising."

It took a moment for her to process it.

Then she howled.

Asuka found it funny too, apparently, he had decided not to question any of her clothing choices on the condition that she wasn't wearing anything *too* inappropriate for her age.

How men processed the most simple of things was beyond her. But hey, that wasn't the only absurd conclusion he came to. His reaction to seeing period blood on her clothes for the first time was just as brain-jamming.

"He—" she wheezed.

"Oh yeah, papa's stupid like that." she nodded, tossing the pretty bralette into the basket Kayama had been dragging, she might as well get some, it wasn't often that she got to spend some quality time with her ever since Seiya was born.

Kayama threw an arm around her, her body still shaking with amusement, "I am so going to tease the hell out of him!"

Asuka simpered, "That's actually nothing compared to how he reacted the first time he saw blood stains on my clothes."

The shaking stopped, baby blue eyes staring at her with blatant betrayal. "You got your period?!" she exclaimed, and of course, her voice perforated every single person shopping in the establishment.

“You bled for the first time and didn't tell me—” she slapped a hand over red painted lips, motioning for her to calm down.

“Please stop screaming.” she implored.

Kayama double-tapped on her wrist to surrender and she let her hand uncover her mouth.

“How could you not tell me?!” she whispered furiously.

Asuka made a difficult face, “Because it wasn't that important?”

Kayama looked like somebody yanked her newly manicured nails. “Not important? Not important?! Asuka my dear girl, you've entered *womanhood* , telling someone is a must! It doesn't have to be Shota, you could've told *me* , aren't I the only closest adult female in your life other than your baa-chan?”

Guilt flooded her veins as Kayama's face continued to show a degree of hurt that shouldn't have been achievable in this circumstance. It wasn't like this was the first time she went through such an ordeal, and albeit how this time was more... *severe* than preferred, and made her empathize with those girls who pronounced how period pains were equivalent to grating their internal organs, she didn't think announcing her menstruating status to anyone was of any importance.

Evidently enough, this was a rite of passage and the sort of situation that her father categorizes as the *things that you don't deem significant, but are, in fact, very much significant*. It was a pretty self-explanatory stratum, one in which she had been advised by her unlicensed therapist to go with the *receiving party's* flow because, in a majority of situations, she was most likely going to be in the wrong.

“I'm sorry, Kayama-oba, I've read about it in plenty of books, and the internet's easily convenient in the area's that I didn't understand. If it makes you any better, I didn't even tell Papa, he just found out and started freaking out about—” *about whether or not she got blood on herself while terrorizing someone* , “whether I injured myself.”

Kayama held her gaze, eyes shimmering more than it was supposed to, then exhaled deeply before bringing her into a side hug. “It's alright, nothing you have to apologize for.” she said, voice light as a feather, gently squeezing her shoulder, “I guess I've been pretty occupied with Sei-chan, to think I didn't notice such a drastic change in the same girl I helped raise. I'm sorry, I've been too inattentive these past few

months.”

She patted the hand squeezing her shoulder, “No worries, Kayama-oba, I know just how attached Sei-chan is to you.” it wasn't anything to worry about, she was juggling her work, and personal life all the while being an amazing mother. Asuka wasn't the least bit offended that her aunt didn't notice her bodily changes. She wasn't a kid. Just an adult going through puberty for the second time.

After that, they ended up doing more shopping. And sure Kayama was bothered with the whole thing, still hung up on being a ‘bad aunt’ and all, but Asuka had plenty of distracting stories to cover up for that. Most of which included embarrassing her father, which was all worth it at the end of the day when they returned home with bags full of clothes and bellies filled with food.

15th March 3103

Shota liked to think his daughter had a great school year. Mostly due to how he didn't have a single phone call on someone's kid having a bloody nose or a bruised bum. Suppose he was still *that* ignorant and unaware of Asuka's unique past and the mental age that she oh-so *loved* to whine about despite acting the opposite of it in some very crucial situations that called for such maturity, he'd *assume* the lack of incriminating phone calls were the result of her acting like the adult she proclaimed to be, but he knew better.

When she was in elementary school, there was no such thing that kept her occupied. As far as he knew, her work with Tsuji only started flourishing recently, the seal works he jolted at the sight of were work-in-progress due to her skirmish with an archaic villain, and the training and exercise sessions they shared were the cause of her newly found passion of being a hero, all in all in she was busy, largely occupied, and too *tired* to engage in ‘childish scuffles’.

That didn't mean she was exempt from such activities, they just didn't reach his ears through the *management* . Asuka was more than happy to convey why her fists were discolored or why her shoes looked as if they were chewed by a goat. Apparently, her new friend, the *only* friend that she had introduced him to throughout the whole school year, was a magnet of trouble and she couldn't, in her exact words:

very well let him be, his bones almost disintegrated the last time he got punched, someone's gotta look out for him!

It didn't make much sense that the boy wasn't scrawny, he was well built and tall, and also suspiciously handsome, but he let that point slide because Asuka referred to him as a *kid* in the majority of her narrations.

Ultimately, he was glad that he didn't have to take trips to her school.

And that mood on how her school year ended on such a bright, uneventful note might have extended until the end of the day, but his mother had different plans seeing how she was glaring daggers at him.

It would help if he *knew* what this was about, but he *didn't*, and for the longest time after she graced herself in his home with the same irate look, opening and closing her mouth, trying to choke out whatever the hell got her *this* mad. He had even taken some time to brew tea and offer cookies, both of which she was chomping on, still leaving him curious and unable to cook the feast he was planning for Asuka's last day of school. And what a waste of time this was turning out to be when he had taken an early leave from school to do this too.

“*Usually* this is the other way around.”

Her glare intensified.

“I'm not a mind reader, just what happened?”

She kept her cookie down this time, wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

“Is this about Asuka?” he goaded more.

Slowly, her manicured nails grazed against the glossy black bag she lugged around, hand dipping inside and revealing a brown envelope. Then she shoved it at him, eyes narrowed, and if he looked close enough, her lips were wobbling— which made no fucking sense, but he had the Enveloped of Truth in his hand that would discern the reason for such emotions, so he wrenched it open, taking out a bundle of photos.

The first thing that caught his eye was a blob of orange.

Kozume.

The photo was taken at a takoyaki place the three of them visited a few months back. He wasn't there in the second photo, just Asuka and Kozume, both of them sitting outside an ice cream parlor, capturing the moment Kozume rubbed off an ice cream smudge from her nose. The third one captured him and Kozume having a meal at the ramen place near Tsuji's headquarters, discussing something about receiving help from TCU on a case he was having difficulties on, and he recalled pellucidly the feeling of being imminently surprised after learning that Haruto was in fact, *not* the boss man of such a delicate operation, hence why the photo catching him the exact moment he had choked on a slice of chicken. The fourth, fifth, and sixth— all pictures hold one common factor; Kozume. "...what the hell is this supposed to be?"

"I don't know, Shota, *you* tell me." his mother juttet, " *Why* in the world is a Pro Hero such as yourself hanging around a *Yakuza heir* ? And how could you *ever* let that scoundrel anywhere near Asuka-chan?!"

"Why the hell are you stalking me again?" he snapped back, his mind mulling over Kozume being a fucking *Yakuza heir*. Did Asuka know about this? *By Kami was he going to grill her a new one when she got home?*

She huffed, "I did not stalk you."

"I suppose these pictures just *fell* on your lap."

She clasped her hands together, leaning forward on her seat. "Shota, I did not *stalk* you." It confused him how his mother was dumping all these confusing expressions on him; anger, hurt, sorrow, *agitation* , "Listen to me, this is serious, and it *will* be out of my control if you don't tell me exactly *why* and *how* you're in contact with this man." And now it was fear,

"These pictures were taken by the Hero Safety Commission, their surveillance unit has eyes on him. He's already high up on the list for being a Yakuza heir, but now there's intel on him being involved in a high stake intelligence group that calls themselves 'TCU'. We don't have solid evidence, and they are *frustratingly* good at hiding themselves, but if you have any sort of connection to these criminals, then...then..." she trailed off, breathing shakily.

Somewhere along his memories, words churned and vomited: *who wants to go there? Do you have any idea how creepy that place is? If this*

was Konoha, then the commission would be the equivalent of The Root.

Asuka was right.

*According to Sai, they had this motto, The unseen ones who support the great tree of Konoha from the depths of the earth, it sounded mysterious and cool, but it was just a corrupt subset of the ANBU who operated under this geezer named Danzo, an S-class asshole, by the way. They did all sorts of under-the-hand dealings in the name of bettering Konoha, **eradicating** the Uchiha clan was one.*

Eradicating.

Was it... was it possible?

“Shota, tell me why, *please*, I can’t...” she cut herself off again, face scrunching weirdly. “The hero commission doesn’t know I’m here, and I’m not supposed to have any affiliation with this case, but I *have* to fix this before any of this can spiral out of control, so please, tell me everything you know.” she pleaded.

Shota isn’t sure what to let out. He couldn’t sell out Asuka, he couldn’t sell out Kozume, and then there was his mother fearing for his possible...death?

“Kaa-san,” he said, keeping his voice steady, “it’s not what you think.”

Yes, *yes it was*. Regardless, now was the time to exploit his newfound talent of bullshitting through things he couldn’t explain.

“Then what are these photos supposed to be?” she shot back.

“Kozume is Asuka’s godfather,” he declared, and that just made his mother’s skin paler than it was. “But it isn’t what you’re thinking, I didn’t know anything about him being a Yakuza heir. We just meet up occasionally, and there’s no talk of this ‘TCU’, or anything illegal.”

She looked at him in disbelief, “How in the world did you let a random man be Asuka’s godfather?!”

He wondered that too.

“He saved Asuka’s life once,” he said.

It was the other way around.

“I was grateful for that, and Kozume loved children, so eventually he ended up asking me to be her godfather.”

He wasn't sure about Kozume loving children, but he loved Asuka.

“....and you just agreed?” his mother asked, quirking a brow.

“I agreed.”

He never did. That orange blob of annoyance had done everything of his own volition while handing off a legal-illegal entity to a kid.

“Shota,” she sighed, a hand patting herself on the chest, “while I’m glad that you aren't involved in anything unlawful, it doesn't change the fact that Takayama Kozume is an acknowledged heir of the Takayama group, you can’t let Asuka-chan or yourself hang around that kind of person.”

Shota stared at the photos littering the coffee table, contemplating on a reply.

She picked up a cookie from the plate, “At least now I can breathe easy knowing you won’t be...”

Assassinated? Put to death? Imprisoned? Why did she keep stopping mid-sentence?

“Well, I’m sure you’ll be getting a visit from an official team that’s investigating this case,” she continued, smiling for the first time since she entered his home, “just don’t let them know I had a hand in this.”

He was getting increasingly good at that.

“Kozume isn't all that bad.” he finally said, making his mother chew her cookie a lot slower. “I know that he used to run a gang, but he’s reformed himself, runs a legal entity now, and hasn't displayed any suspicious behavior that would make me cut ties with him. I don’t know anything about him being affiliated with Yakuza, but he spends plenty of time with Asuka. You know just how sharp she can be, plus with me being a Hero, and her aspiring to be one, she won’t let any illicit actions slide.”

All this lying was making his tongue burn.

“Shota...”

And he knew what she was going to say. She wasn't comfortable with

the idea of Kozume being anywhere near them.

“I know what you want to say,” he said, “even if you think Kozume might be a bad influence, it doesn't change how I'm indebted to him. I can't be absolute when I say I'll cut ties with him, but I'll talk it out and hear the truth from him myself.”

She took hold of the teacup, thumb pressing on its ridge as she looked at him with furrowed brows, “I'm not content with your approach to this, then again, you also claim that he holds genuine affection for Asuka-chan, so I'm hoping he too will consider what's best for her.”

He almost snorted. Kozume letting go of Asuka? It was a damn pipe dream.

Later when his mother left in a much lighter mood, he started prepping for dinner, mind bubbling with questions for Asuka when she returned home.

*

Chapter End Notes

Helo!

Full form of TCU for all who are wondering: Tsujisuji Corruption Union

Ngl, I couldn't sit down for very long to write this chapter, one scene took at least three sittings. I'm excited to write it down but why am I so lazy? T-T

Anyways, hope you all enjoyed this chapter and do share your thoughts! I love reading them ^^

If any of you want to reach out to me, here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)
List of OC's

Takayama Kozume- godfather

Riko, Kayo, Takemi, Ikari Heisuke- Classmates

Yamada Seiya- Hizashi&Kayama's kid

Ehari Sana- Asuka/Sakura bff

Aizawa Kazue- Shota's mom/ Asuka-Sakura's grandma

Quesadillas

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to Grig9700 for beta reading 🍀

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

15th March 3103

There was something equally funny and imposing about how both father and daughter could look so similar and yet, not so similar.

The only physical similarity he could gauge from the pair opposite to him was the unruly black hair, everything else was void. Of course, there were ticks and habits that they shared, like how both of them twitched their nose at things they disliked. How they tended to blink more times than normal when they got nervous— which wasn't often, he had observed it more on Papa-chan than Peridot. There was also that unnerving thing they did where they would just *stare*. No explanation, no visible emotion on their faces, not even a simple greeting returned when conveyed, just staring.

He was currently on the receiving end of the latter.

"I seriously don't like this." Kozume let out, speaking for the first time since his cheery greeting grinded itself in the mixer and aviated to the ocean.

His normal reaction to this was to get out of sight because, really, it just unsettled him. But that wasn't possible due to the current circumstance— that being how he was *invited* to the Aizawa household in the dead of the night along with a peculiar request of using Abi's shadow quirk. He wasn't told *why* he had to use a shadow quirk when he could just waltz in through the front door.

"Is it the shirt? Because it was the prettiest one in the store and I got it for half the price." he tried, splaying his hands as he showed off his watermelon-printed shirt.

They didn't seem very impressed.

Then again, most people didn't agree with his fashion choices, which

was quite stupid of them, really, but it was alright, not everyone could be as sophisticated as he was.

"Just so you know, I suck at guessing games, so this could go on for a while if you both continue to glare holes into my pretty face."

Papa-chan's face twitched by a fraction.

But Peridot was the one who spoke, "Why'd I have to hear about *you* being a Yakuza heir from Papa?"

His smile withered, "What?"

"Don't *what* me," she snapped, "baa-chan came over to warn us about distancing ourselves from the *scoundrel* who was involved with the Yakuza. Papa is being watched because of his affiliation with *you* and he'll be taken for questioning soon— you should very well know what that means?"

Kozume knew what that meant.

* * *

Asuka was beyond pissed.

First was a half an hour lecture from her father declaring how she was hiding things from him *again*, then she spent some time internally panicking because he had cleared the misunderstanding after her repeated words of how she had *no idea* Kozume was even related to such an organization, and as if that wasn't bad enough, her father was going to get *interrogated* because of it. Albeit he assured her that it wasn't going to be the type of interrogation she imagined, it still didn't deter the possibilities of how his fabrication could combust into utter shit because people tended to have uselessly good quirks!

And before she got to the part where she'd have to sabotage the investigation, she had to clear up the facts from Kozume— Kozume whom she was ready to clock over the head and toss into the nearest river. As if his hand in provoking adversary groups who held blatant hate for Tsuji that managed to flourish from a pile of dead flies to a garden of flowers wasn't *enough*, he had to go on and be some stupid *Yakuza heir* of all things and garner HSC's attention. She'd admit that her little group was already well on their way to being cognizant soon with the way they progressed, but her orange blob of a godfather just

had to make himself the catalyst and ruin everything.

“It’s not what you think,” Kozume spoke, and his voice was *mellow*.

Kozume didn't do mellow.

Her eyebrows furrowed, “What?”

“It’s *true* that I’m supposed to be the heir,” he started, “but I ran away from home when I was twenty-two, and I think I made my intention very clear on how I didn't want *anything* to do with my old man’s.... *business*...”

She felt a headache rising.

“And your otou-san didn't drag you back home?” her father asked from the side, quirking a brow, “Didn't try to make contact with you within this period? Never initiated to bring his ‘*heir*’ back home?”

Kozume huffed, “Well they *tried*, especially Haruto, that old geezer. He was *always* pestering me to return for the longest time.”

“Haruto-san?” she questioned.

“Oh yeah,” he agreed, nodding zealously, “he followed me after that whole ‘running away from home’ thing, hell-bent on making me return ‘cos I’m the only person that can inherit the business after my old man kicks the bucket— all bullshit, really, Yakuza these days don't hold much power,” he shrugged casually, leaning back on the sofa, “it’s the reason why I built Tsuji in first place.”

“So why have they been calling you an heir?” her father asked.

He shrugged again, “Shit if I know. All I know is that I don't have any connections with them. Not since I left anyways. And as for Haruto, you don't have to worry about him spilling the beans, he’d already given in to the fact that I’m never returning after I met you— I mean Yakuza versus the sweet empire we’re building *and* the Union? The choice should be obvious.” then he leaned forward, gaze moving to her father, “Enough about me, what the hell are we doin’ about Papa-chan?”

“First,” her father’s brows twitched, “stop calling me that.”

“Well, now that I know you haven't been in touch with them, this makes things easier.” she pronounced, “Now you both listen to me...”

19th March 3103

At first, when he was first transferred to the surveillance unit of the hero commission, Ryoto was more or less, treading on air. The subject was notoriously difficult to enter in the first place, and he who had been serving in the training unit for half a decade, which by the way, had the least records in transfer from what he had studied in the records, was chosen to be in such an integral part of the commission.

Though by the end of the first few cases he was assigned to, his joy diminished significantly once he started noticing what the hell was going on. At first, he thought it was smart intelligence work— then it started to get fucking weird.

They were monitoring *heroes*. Heroes who served society. Heroes who protected them. *Heroes who colluded with criminals. Heroes who were assumed to be conspiring with villains.* And when he, a rookie junior officer at that time, was ordained to investigate such cases to the depth, to collect evidence, and follow through with the task without questioning his seniors, he did it. He did it without so much as a squeak of indignation.

Of course, this was because he *assumed* that the corrupt ones were going to be serving time in jail, or be stripped of their license, or something along those lines. So all in all Ryoto had lots of assumptions; the commission did such things in secrecy *because* they want to keep a pristine image of what Heroes were, they did this because they didn't want to stir the general public with such absurd notions, they did this in silence to keep the peace *as it was*.

And imagine his surprise when the Heroes he investigated started expiring one by one. The first one died because of delayed backup. The second one died due to a stray gunshot. The third one fell off a building while saving a kid from falling off the ledge— it made sense, and it *didn't*.

Initially, it horrified him.

But, as his partner at that time had said, *you get used to it*.

And he sort of did. Five years of indirectly contributing to numerous deaths of heroes, he was desensitized to a plethora of things— of course, he had bat-shit crazy nightmares on his worst days, and sometimes his heart wanted to squeeze out of his ribcage and flutter

its way to the paper shredder, but it was *okay*.

"Aizawa," his partner Eiko read out loud, tapping on the nameplate hung beside the gate. Then she smiled weirdly, the kind of smile mean old ladies had while waiting to shove a pot full of dirt onto a kid's head.

See, while it took him years or so to adjust to such change, his new partner that had transferred from the main unit was seemingly a ball of malignancy. When *she* first figured out what happened to all the heroes they investigated, she scoffed and said: *serves them right*.

One might say her moral compass had its needles ripped out and stabbed themselves into her cold, dead heart.

Then again, people who were recruited to their boat of death bearers were often observed thoroughly before being integrated into their division, and with how Eiko's personality and conduct were, it wasn't much of a surprise that she got promoted early on.

"Remind me why you're so excited about this case again?" he questioned, pushing off the gates.

Eiko huffed, "I always knew there was something wrong with this family. His daughter was already reckless enough, and now *he* is suspected of conspiring with a criminal."

He held in the urge to roll his eyes, "No one is guilty until proven."

"Oh you don't understand, senpai." she pressed, halting him from ringing the bell, "His daughter is a whole damn state secret for being the only person recorded in the whole of quirk history for manifesting *two* quirks within a gap of four years *just because* her dear otou-san thinks she'll be cut open and examined for being the 'special flower' that she is. And as if her running off into a blazing building and disregarding all protocols wasn't bizarre enough, she even dared to decline our offer of getting professional training— can you believe the nerve of this family? The amount of glory our country could have for being the first ever country to have produced such an individual, the untapped potential she has we *could've* explored—"

"You do realize you're talking about a kid?" he cut in.

Eiko rolled her eyes.

He raised his hand to press the bell, desperately wishing his old

partner hadn't retired. Why did *he* of all people have to be stuck with this sociopath?

Maybe he should retire too.

It took a few moments of silence before there was shuffling behind the door, then it opened, revealing a man tied in the most frilly apron he had ever seen.

"Can I help you?" the suspect grunted, seemingly unbothered by what he wore while staring at Ryoto with an almost bored expression.

Ryoto cleared his throat, "Ah, yes, I am Kamimura Ryoto and this is Maruyama Eiko." he gestured towards his partner, not missing the way the scruffy man before them furrowed his brows at her. "We are from the hero safety commission and we were hoping you could answer some of our questions regarding a case we are working on."

Aizawa Shota, their person of interest clad in a frilly apron with flour manning his hair, scowled. Openly. "Does it have to be now?"

Ryoto almost snorted, but his sociopathic partner was the one who spoke. "It *has* to be now, we cannot delay our investigation as this case has a direct correlation to you. Failure of cooperation will lead to forceful—"

"I only asked if it had to be now," Shota snapped at his partner, "it's a one-word answer, you don't have to give me a whole speech."

For some not-so-outlandish reason, Ryoto found Eiko's vexation hilarious.

Soon after Shota was leading them to the living room and he could hear voices overlap.

"That looks hideous."

"I'm sorry to say this love, but normal people just can't appreciate my sense of esthetics."

"Yes, *clearly* you have to be abnormal to design a cupcake to look like it has explosive diarrhea."

"Hey, that's not very nice— hmm, you know, you guys are a *wee* bit overdressed for our cupcake party. "

Ryoto nearly bit his tongue from seeing the alleged yakuza heir

wearing the same frilly apron whilst holding a piping bag.

“Who are they?” the girl next to Takayama Kozume asked.

“Work people,” Shota answered dismissively as gestured to the sofa, indicating that they should sit. Ensuingly, he sat on the one-seater sofa, “Ask me what you want.”

Although there was a considerable distance from the dining table where the supposed mafia heir and Wonder Girl was decorating batches of cupcakes, Ryoto didn't feel very comfortable opening his mouth and asking what he wanted to ask. Fortunately, he had a bulldozer for a partner.

“The inquiries and information we have are *sensitive*.” Eiko pressed, her orange skin flaring, “So we request somewhere private where there *isn't* an audience present.”

Promptly after both Kozume and Wonder Girl trudged out of the room with disgruntled faces, the hero went on to serve them peach milk and cupcakes.

Eiko didn't touch the food like he did. Instead, she opened her brief box with a click, getting out the dossier she had immaculately compiled. Then she cleared her throat, regarding the blank man opposite to them with her usual Look

Ryoto liked to call it the Witch Look.

“Now,” she started, “I'm sure you are *very* familiar with Takayama Kozume seeing how he was just ornamenting cupcakes along with your daughter.”

“I am,” Shota answered.

Ryoto wondered how he couldn't even gauge an ounce of nervousness from this man. Was he confident that he wasn't involved in any criminal activities? Was he seriously oblivious? Or was it that he was just exceedingly good at keeping a poker face?

“Then are you aware that Kozume Takayama is affiliated with the Yakuza? The heir to the Takayama group?”

Ryoto watched closely; a twitch, a nose rub, a bout of nervous laughter, shaking knees, playing with the loose curls of his black hair — but nothing.

“I am,” he answered again.

Eiko smiled triumphantly, “Then what, may I ask, are you doing with a criminal of his stature while being a hero yourself?”

This time, his hand rose to massage his neck, and Ryoto pondered over whether or not this man was starting to show his agitation. “Aren’t you people supposed to have up-to-date information about stuff like this?” the conundrum of a man drawled, eyes displaying undisguised mockery, “Kozume hasn’t been in contact with his family ever since he ran away from home nine years ago and denounced his position as heir at the same time around.”

Ryoto took a third bite of his cupcake. It was a point they couldn’t refute. Primarily, the reason why Kozume was even *being* investigated was due to his rumored connection to TCU, if not for that, a powerless Yakuza heir didn’t even get their share of attention until the yearly examination— said examination being held every five years. But this one caught attention because of his relation to a hero, and that’s *exactly* what surveillance specialized in.

Ultimately, what Aizawa Shota said was correct, they didn’t have up-to-date information for a reason, still, that didn’t cancel out how their suspect was also involved in a gang called Tsujisuji. What explanation could he *possibly* have for being related to that group while holding his status as a hero?

Enough, he even had an answer for that. One which made Eiko’s skin convolute into a rare neon.

“Now this is just ridiculous.” he scoffed, “Tsujisuji is a *reformed* gang, and it has been for the past seven years. Now they run the company on *legal* terms. Kozume might have been a criminal long before I knew him, but he’s redeemed himself. Do you think I’d just let anyone be my daughter’s godfather?”

“What?” his partner squawked.

What indeed. Ryoto swiped his peach juice from the table, easily slurping the content.

Was it the rare speculation forming in his heart that this single father wasn’t involved in such insidious crimes? Was it the joy of knowing he might not be the reason another child would become an orphan again? Or was it just seeing the variety of negative emotions on his partner’s face who normally appeared to be a self-satisfied she-

buffoon, haughtily strutting about that she would *yank* the corruption out from its root and cook them in a cauldron?

But there were words of *might* and *ifs*, still unasked questions and uncertain aspects, so he buried the mounting hope, patting the soil under his palm.

Nothing ever good came out of false hope.

“Leaving aside the *absurd* notion of a parent making a criminal their child’s godparent,” Eiko gritted out, “would you explain why the employees of this supposedly *conscientious* company have been referring to Aizawa Asuka as ‘Asuka-sama’ and ‘little boss’, and yourself as ‘Shota-sama’? And why have they been proclaiming that a mere ten-year-old is their savior?” his kohai smiled manically, “It’s not difficult for us to find out that your daughter has been attending middle school; three years ahead of what year she’s supposed to be in, I would not omit the possibility that she too, might be involved in—”

“Pfft—”

Ryoto had wanted to laugh then too, but it was his job to explore from all angles, and a genius child wasn't exactly a vain deduction. Especially seeing how the employees they managed to interview were so rabidly overprotective and uncooperative in supplying coherent information. And it wasn't like they could force their way in anyways, even a permit needed a valid objective, speculation surrounding a rumored involvement with an invasive group of intelligence gatherers whilst having no tangible evidence was just stupid.

Ironically enough, the division that he worked in took significance in such rumors. Be that as it may, half the rumors they probed were more often than not, true.

He continued to watch as their person of interest looked sideways, avoiding their gazes as his shoulder shook violently while he covered his mouth with a palm. It made Eiko furious.

“Aizawa-san, we would like it if you could answer our inquiries with utmost sincerity.” Ryoto requested, not wanting his partner to explode.

Soon enough, his laughter died down considerably, but the mirth flooding his eyes was hard to miss. “You want sincerity when you’re asking such nonsensical questions? I’ll admit that Asuka’s an eccentric kid, but making wild assumptions of how a ten-year-old could be

associated with villainous activities just because of how people who adore her address her in a specific manner?— I'm sorry, but have you lost your mind?"

Well, when he put it like *that*, it did seem like they had their brain filled with shit.

Eiko opened her mouth to refute, but Shota beat her to it. "As I've mentioned before, Kozume is Asuka's godfather." he pressed, "But before that, she's someone he is indebted to."

Ryoto bit into his fifth cupcake. This strange sentiment of having such implicative claims that could easily make anyone fluster be brushed away with wild stories— it wasn't a bad feeling at all.

It also showed that someone wasn't guilty.

Maybe he wouldn't see through this death.

"When she was three," Shota continued, "she saved him from a lethal stroke. Ever since then he's lugged after my daughter like a dog on a leash, whining about how he was going to raise her like his own daughter." he brushed the flour on his sleeves dismissively, "One thing led to another, and I told to him to clean up his act if he wanted to be anywhere near Asuka, then a year later Suji&co started to get better, they stopped terrorizing people, helped the community within their means, made multiple efforts to convey a positive image of themselves — and only *after* he proved himself did I let him be my daughter's godfather."

There was silence after that answer.

Not for long though.

"How does that explain the employees' behavior towards you and your daughter?" Eiko snapped.

Shota blinked, "Isn't that self-explanatory?"

Ryoto had to agree, it kind of was. Takayama Kozume had the loyalty of his people. Wouldn't it be an obvious conclusion that someone who had saved their boss, someone that was the catalyst for the notorious gang to reform to such lengths— wouldn't that someone be the receiving end of such affection?

"See, the majority of the employees at Suji are former gang members,"

Shota said, stretching the words with cynicism.

No matter the history behind Eiko's animosity towards the Aizawas', even she should exert some form of professionalism. Why did she keep asking obvious questions and aggravating him anyways?— then again, it wasn't only Eiko who was being so discourteous, even the hero in question displayed numerous tells of how he disliked his kouhai.

Maybe this man was just as petty as Eiko.

“And mind you, most of them have had pretty bad experiences before being taken in by Kozume, and as much as he's annoying, he's also big-hearted. These people found solidarity and solace within the gang he formed, *hence why* they offer such assuasive loyalty towards him—are you following me so far?”

He was positive he could hear teeth grinding from beside him.

“Because of how they regard him, they also regard people who he calls *family* with equal significance. Asuka spends plenty of time with him at his office and I mostly visit to drag her back home. Does that answer all of your questions?”

So to sum it up, the reason why Aizawa Shota was seen together with Takayama Kozume was that the latter was his daughter's godfather after some weird encounter with the three-year-old kid saving his life, subsequently, an infamous gang amended their heinous ways to becoming a supposedly congenial company who were also not-so oddly enough, scathing to people asking about their prized boss and the family that he cherished in any undesirable way due to their unfailing loyalty.

How bizarre.

“Just one more question,” Ryoto said, ignoring the way Eiko slammed her briefcase shut, “are you aware of a group that goes by TCU? The full name is not known as of yet, but there have been multiple claims promoting that Takayama Kozume is involved with the group. Our agents have confirmed that multiple rival gangs have proclaimed this stance. Of course, it might be out of pure spite since Takayama-san has accomplished a cosmic feat compared to his fellow acquaintances, even so, I would like to clear the matter since that is the reason we have graced your home uninvited.”

To his amusement, the other sneered. “So everything else for the past forty minutes was a waste of time? You could've gotten straight to the

point instead of making my daughter and I seem out to be criminals.”

Ryoto shrugged. It was all necessary to conclude whether or not he was going to expire soon.

His lack of reaction didn't appear to rile the man, “As for your question, I've heard of the group. And they've helped us out on a few cases we were stuck on.”

“HA!” Eiko shouted, pointing a finger at the not-so-startled man, “I knew it! Taking assistance from a hazardous group of vermins—”

“You know, the first thing I'm going to do after you *leave* is lodge a complaint about your lack of professionalism.”

“Yes, and *you* have just been a ball of sunshine, haven't you, Aizawa-san?”

“Of course I have. You should be *glad* your incompetence didn't make me throw you out the second you assumed my daughter was a criminal.”

“It is my *job* to evaluate all and any aspects relating to the case.”

“Is it also your job to be so intolerably annoying?”

“Why you—”

“Enough!” Ryoto interrupted, eyes twitching imperceptibly.

“Maruyama, go wait in the car until I finish.”

She didn't protest, stomping out while muttering under her breath. Then Ryoto focused on the other who was glaring towards the door.

“Aizawa-san, could you elaborate on the part where you mentioned how they helped you in a few cases?” he watched as Shota inhaled deeply, narrowing his somewhat disgruntled eyes at Ryoto.

“Sometimes it just appears in a bundle on the nearest cubicle to the door, other times it's sent through the mail,” he shrugged, “of course, we've tried tracing back to the sources, but it's mostly a waste of time. It might be a specific time the next transactions are going to take place, a blueprint to a base of human traffickers, a tip on a mall bombing, or a large-scale robbery— it's random at best. It might be from a hazardous group of vermins', but they've helped us save countless lives on many occasions.”

Ryoto didn't detect any insincerity on his face.

So he smiled.

“We will contact you if we have any further inquiries. Thank you for your cooperation, Aizawa-san.”

He only received a short nod as an answer, which only made his grin wider.

They'd have to evaluate the cases involving the group that was mentioned and cross-check the facts and words spoken today, but other than that, Ryoto had an impression that this case was going to end quite peacefully.

21st May 3103

“Honey, please stop trying to burn my quesadillas.”

“I'm literally passing by the oven, which of your eyes saw me try to do that?!”

“That right there, the passing— HEY keep the butter knife *down*, my worry is justified!”

“Pray tell what kind of nonsensical justification you can have for that?”

“Oh, so you *don't* remember last week when you passed by the oven and made my banana cake go up in flames?”

“*That* was because the batter spilled.”

“No, *that* was because *you* are a hazard to the kitchen— KEEP THE KNIFE DOWN—”

Shota ignored the squabbling pair of adults and swirled his fork with spaghetti before nearing it to Seiya's mouth, “Your parents are the same age as you.”

Curious eyes blinked up at him, tilting his tiny head at the commentary as he continued to chew his food.

“Yeah I don't expect you to get it.” he wiped near his mouth with a

tissue, then picked up the fork to prepare another serving. “Unless, of course, you’re a weird baby like Asuka was.”

Seiya readily took the food, chomping leisurely, but his brows furrowed.

“What, you don't like me talking about her?”

“Ka, no.”

“Well ‘Ka’, is my daughter, and I don't appreciate you frowning about her.”

Ruby eyes shimmered at him, “Tata’s me.”

He snorted, “I’m not yours.”

Seiya glared at him, “Tata’s me, mama’s me, papa’s me. Ka, *no*.”

“It’s ‘mine’, not ‘me’.” he corrected, wiping the sauce from the corner of his lips,

“Me!”

Shota fed him another portion of the spaghetti, “Yeah you don't listen to me telling you to be nice to my daughter, why would this be any different, right?”

The one-year-old scrunched his face.

“You know, for a midget, you’re extremely possessive.”

Seiya beamed, taking that as a compliment.

Shortly after he finished feeding Seiya, Hizashi announced that he finished packing the food while Kayama scrubbed down the dishes hard enough to chafe them.

* * *

There was a very distinct sense of bamboozlement Hizashi experienced when Shota had casually thrown about that Asuka was going to be skipping three whole grades just after a month into her horrible, *horrible* accident.

And he was vague about it too.

It wasn't like Hizashi was ignorant of the fact that his niece was intelligent. He knew she was. He just didn't know she was at the caliber where Nedzu would pull a few strings to ensure her admission to freaking *middle school*.

All in all, Shota's irately cryptic word relayed that Asuka wanted it, and he the indulging father that he was, *allowed* it.

But he and Kayama weren't idiots and Asuka had no problem being blunt. The girl had openly announced that she was going to pursue heroics despite how Shota's face scrunched up like someone threw a lemon at him.

It wasn't hard to guess that Shota hadn't fully come to terms with her career choice, and it was given too since Asuka had such a near-death experience. Hero work wasn't exactly a walk in the park.

Still, even he had to agree. Was it the best choice for a child to willingly part with her age group and move on just because she was so goal-oriented? Then again, there was no use pondering over such matters, Asuka was more hard-headed than Shota ever was, and that was saying something.

"You guys are here!"

At the familiar voice, Hizashi caught onto his only niece jogging up to where they had set the lunch, smiling at how she hugged Kayama and Seiya while the latter tried to punch his way out of the trap.

"Ah, Sei-chan, I can just feel the love pouring out of your tushy punches."

"KYAH!"

"Behave, will you?" Shota tugged her, distancing from his red-faced child.

"So, how's it going? Who's winning?" Hizashi prodded, offering her a quesadilla.

His niece smirked, "Who do you think?"

"From the way your face keeps glowing, it *definitely* can't be your class." Kayama drawled, setting Seiya on the picnic cloth.

Asuka huffed, stuffing her face with the quesadilla he made with the utmost care, but then halfway through she started waving at someone.

Someone being a *boy*.

“And who’s *that*?” Kayama wiggled her brows.

“My friend.” Asuka quipped, grinning in a vaguely unhinged manner, “You guys should meet him— OI IKARI, GET OVER HERE!”

Said friend proceeded to get red in the face, undoubtedly pretending as if he hadn’t heard the call.

“Ah, such a cute thing.” Kayama sighed.

“WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? COME OVER HERE—”

“Will you stop embarrassing the boy?” Shota cut in.

Asuka smiled, “Oh come on, I’m just calling him over to meet ‘zashi-oji and Kayama-oba, what’s so embarrassing about *that*?”

Shota only narrowed his eyes and said nothing more.

To his amusement, the boy started walking over at an exceedingly fast pace with brilliant precision of dodging other set picnics.

“*What* is wrong with you?” the boy with pink hair gritted, cheeks flaring red.

“I ask her that every day.”

“Papa!”

Hizashi chortled.

“Are you her boyfriend?” Kayama said, blinking expectantly, to which both Asuka and the pink-haired boy scrunch their faces.

“Okay *stop*,” Asuka held up her hand containing his *probably* cooled quesadilla, “this is my *friend*, Ikari Heisuke.” Then she pointed at himself and Kayama, “And this ‘zashi-oji’ and Kayama-oba— and they may *look* different from normal, but they are who I said they were, alright?”

At that, Hizashi grew intrigued, “Who did you say we were?”

“Present Mic and Midnight?” Heisuke filled in, and Hizashi couldn't deny the thing pricking his pride when the kid looked so uncertain while saying it.

It wasn't like they were in *total* disguise. Yes, his outfit was more subdued compared to the leather he wore, his hair more flowy and free, and his face void of his glasses. As for Kayama, her choice of clothes for today's outing wasn't exactly R-rated, and her face was bare except for the lip gloss she swatched over, even so, none of them looked so varyingly different that they wouldn't be recognizable even after announcing their aliases.

Keeping that aside though, Hizashi had an irately budding feeling of wanting to sock his black-haired best friend for seeming uncannily jaunty.

“It's the hair, ain't it?” Hizashi let out.

“It's the breast, right? You can't see them because I'm wearing something loose, but I can flash you—”

“You suggest flashing someone *one more* time and I'm divorcing you.”

Kayama laughed, “I'd like to see you try.”

“I'm not joking—”

“Alright, break it up, keep your quarreling for when you get home.” Asuka intervened, not-so-discreetly pointing her finger toward Heisuke.

“No, I believe you!” the kid exclaimed.

“Really?” Asuka quirked a brow.

Heisuke briefly glared at her before diverting his gaze back to the couple. “I really do, I listen to your radio show every Thursday and kaa-san always makes me go out to buy your special gym merch-pant-thing,—so it'd be hard for me to *not* know who you are.” he sputtered, “It's just that she only told me a few hours back and you guys look different from usual— I'm sorry I didn't recognize you, please believe —”

Kayama guffawed.

And Hizashi, of course, tried to rectify it, “It's alright even if you don't

know us by sight, I know we look different than unusual. It's nothing we'll hold against you, little listener."

And just when he calmed down, Asuka started to match her father's previous jaunty face.

"Hmm, that's weird," she stretched, "you seemed to have believed Papa was an underground hero right off the bat—"

"ALRIGHT," Heisuke screeched, "we've got something to discuss about an upcoming race so I'm afraid I'll have to borrow her—" and then he dragged away Asuka, his hand still covering her mouth.

Amidst the buzzing chatter of the people surrounding them, Seiya's nonsensical babbling to Shota while the boy kept trying to knot his godfather's hair in several angles, and an irritating pot of chicken stock frothing inside of him, Kayama cupped her breasts.

"I'm sure he'd have recognized me if I flashed these."

27th September 3104

Naruto had always said that he'd bring Sasuke home, that their traitor teammate would eventually give up his hatred and return where they were. Where his friends were.

Funnily enough, Sakura had a hard time believing it.

And for valid reasons too.

She had seen the hatred flooding his eyes, the disgust frothing from the very mention of returning and giving up his self-destructing revenge for something as measly as friends. Not to mention how he'd tried to kill her twice. Maybe that's why she was more mellow to the idea of bringing him home than Naruto was. Though that didn't necessarily mean she didn't want him back in the village— she did, she imagined it would be...nice.

But it was also complicated because there was a hell of a lot of unresolved feelings for all the shit he pulled on them. Sakura knew she wasn't as forgiving as her blond friend, but to think she'd let the spiteful side of her win while tending to the ugly gash marring his chest from when he had emerged into the battlefield, claiming some nonsense on how he was willing to side with Konoha again. She wasn't feeling very welcoming at that moment. At least with mayhem convulsing amidst the fighting and killing

she could ignore him and focus on more important things, but having him sit across her while he scowled about— it just made her want to punch the stomach she just finished reconstructing.

“Will you stop squirming?” she snapped, pushing him down for the nth time.

“And will you do something about the fucking pain? Aren't you supposed to be a medic?” he sneered back.

“I could,” she shrugged, “but I like seeing you suffer.”

His jaws clenched and hands fisted, “Annoying bitch.”

“Why thank you, traitorous bastard. Would you like me to tear back everything I just stitched up?”

He glared scathingly, but she deduced it as her win from the way he bit his lip.

“SAKURA-CHAN!” a familiar voice resounded before tent sheets rustled and Naruto busted in, “How’s he holding up? Teme you look constipated, are you giving Sakura-chan a hard time— ”

“Naruto, the number of times I’ve told you not to stride inside a medical tent with no authorization—”

“Hey, this is a special occasion, okay?”

“It is not.” she retorted, closing up the rest of his injury. He’d still be a little sore, but that was something he’d have to deal with.

“Well, whatever, you’re done anyways.” Naruto said, closing near her seat, “Plus baa-chan’s going to be here any minute to talk to him, don't worry though, I don't think your punishment’s gonna be that harsh. You have that wound on your chest to thank for.”

Shoving down her mask, Sakura laughed mirthlessly, “Yeah? And who’s to say he didn't take the jab in your place just for his diabolical plans?” she narrowed her eyes at the pale teenager, “Naruto might believe your conviction of ‘joining Konoha’, but I still think you’re full of shit.”

“Sakura-chan!”

“Yes, and I care so much.”

“Alright knock it off!”

She scoffed, "Uhuh, I got the memo when you tried to kill me twice."

"Seriously, what the hell is wrong with both of you?! This is supposed to be a good thing!"

"She's being a bitch." Sasuke snapped.

"You've already said that once."

Naruto let out a frustrated cry, "Can you both just stop? I get that we still have our differences, but Sasuke is healing from an injury and you are tired from being on your feet for fifteen hours straight, so just keep the squabbling for when you're both rational teenagers and call it a day, alright?"

Onyx met Emerald, both glaring and undaunting despite the fatigue thinning them, and the contact only broke when the tent flaps rustled, revealing a grumpy Hokage.

"Uchiha Sasuke," Tsunade pronounced.

"Asuka."

"You should be glad you're the last of your bloodline or I'd be sawing that head of yours right about now."

"Snap out of it."

"But since you've shown a willingness to work with us and considering your skill set, I've decided to postpone your penance until after the war is over. Effective immediately, you'll be under Hatake's supervision, Sakura will be your attending medic, and chakra suppressants will be in order since I'm not stupid enough to trust you. Any signs of betrayal or defiance and you will face serious repercussions— now, is that clear?"

"Asuka!"

She blinked, reorienting herself. And the first thing she saw after the blur cleared was a pair of ash-grey eyes foaming with worry.

"You're back," he said, apprehensive.

She tilted her head, massaging her sore neck, "That's the first one I had in months."

"You've been out of it for twenty minutes." he divulged, "And that's excluding the time before I caught you."

Asuka waved her hand dismissively, “It’s alright, I’m getting past these. I didn’t see anything violent.”

Yea sure, with your hand wrist deep in Sasuke’s stomach, I’m sure you didn’t see anything *violent*.

Piss off, surgeries don’t count.

He stared at her intensely— which kind of peeved her because he was getting good at filtering out her lies. But this one wasn’t even a lie, surgeries weren’t violent and she was a *doctor*.

“What triggered it this time?” he asked finally.

“That yarn of purple wool.” she gestured to the center of the coffee table withholding a basket filled with her father’s supply of wools. “Sasuke had this very thick purple obi that tied his kimono together. And it was about the time he returned to our camp and declared his support for Konoha— it’s nothing major.” she patted his knees, giving him a small smile, “You don’t have to worry, papa, all the scary ones mostly came and went when I was a baby, now it’s all mundane bits.”

Weirdly enough, his face didn’t relax.

“Seriously,” she pressed, “I’m doing well. This is the first one I’ve had in six months, isn’t that a huge improvement?”

He exhaled deeply, “You are,” and the tight smile he gave her made her hold back a wince, “you’re doing a great job.”

After that, he reminded her to reheat the dinner before taking off for his patrol, and she couldn’t help but think she said something wrong because why else would he be that upset?

You’re so stupid.

If you know something, tell me instead of patronizing me!

Figure it out yourself.

Then she was gone.

“You know one of these days, I’m going to drown you in a boiling pot of oil.”

“Ughh, I can’t believe this, are we going to be separated just because my grade sucks?!”

“No, no— baby listen, you’ve just got to work a bit harder on the upcoming exam and you’ll easily be able to get into Tokyo High.”

“Really? You’ll help me, won’t you? I’m not going to slack off this time!”

“My dear Sayo-chan, how could I not help you?”

“You’re the best Shi-kun!”

Behind them, Asuka wanted to clog their voice holes with a pencil.

“Do you ever want to kill yourself, Aizawa-san?” Yumi, her current seatmate enunciated, her auburn eyes boring holes into the couple sitting in front of them.

“Sometimes.” Asuka responded.

Hisayo and Daishi were famously known to be a couple, and three full years into their seemingly imperishable and sycophantic love, the people witnessing it tended to feel more peeved at their display than jealousy.

Not to say that there *wasn't* jealousy. Daishi was easily an attractive prey to some girls due to his sincerity to Hisayo, and Hisayo had twinkling black eyes which complemented her shiny platinum blond hair that *effortlessly* framed her perfect heart-shaped face— all in all, Hisayo was a gem that lacked any skills for academics and Daishi had enough brains for two of them paired with a strikingly boring face.

Love had no relation to common sense.

“You guys are just jealous that my baby dotes on me.” Hisayo turned around, narrowing her eyes at Yumi. Then her.

“I’ll let you believe that.” Yumi snorted.

Asuka smiled at the haughty girl, “So your first choice is Tokyo High,

Okamoto-san?"

Hisayo's mouth contoured into a sneer, "What, you think I can't make it there?"

"Oh no," Asuka drawled, "I'm sure Matsuda-kun can get you up to that standard. He only just needs you to get full marks on every paper, attend extra credit classes, and train you up to perform on one of the compulsory sports— nothing major for your loving boyfriend, right?"

Daishi, ever the optimist, stupidly nodded, "You're right, Aizawa-san. I'll do whatever it takes to get Sayo to go with me!"

"Are you an idiot?" Yumi regarded Daishi, "She's rock bottom in class and has the athletic ability of a four-year-old, I don't know what kind of nonsensical fantasy you're living in, but even if she *does* manage to clean up her act this semester, she's not going to enter Tokyo high unless she's rich enough to get through the back door."

Daishi gaped, and Hisayo turned red.

"Shi-kun, Nomura is bullying me!"

"That's not a very nice thing to say, Nomura-san." Daishi reprimanded, bringing his frothing girlfriend in a side hug, "Anyone can do anything if they put their mind to it, I'm sure Sayo-chan will succeed too!"

This couple just might give someone diabetes.

"Aizawa-san thinks so too, right?" Daishi pressed, staring intensely.

No, she did *not* think so. Determination was certainly the key to success, but Hisayo was a hopeless case not because she was incapable of learning, but because her performance in class was terribly lacking and no amount of last-minute raging was going to nullify that.

"I think Kaneshon High is a perfect place to aim," she said instead.

Their faces only got uglier.

"Kaneshon high?" Yumi repeated, baffled, "Aren't you being too genero—OWW— what'd you kick me for?!"

Asuka stared at her seatmate unblinkingly.

"Ugh, you both are so mean!" Hisayo cried out, standing abruptly and

rushing out of class. Daishi, of course, followed after her, but not before giving them stinky eyes.

"Why was Okamoto-san crying just now?" Heisuke appeared from behind them, his hands carrying a stack of paper.

Asuka snorted, "She couldn't handle the reality."

"Really?" he quirked a brow, settling the papers on her desk.

"Oh come on, she thinks she can get into Tokyo High with some last-minute brainstorming! I get that Matsuda is plenty smart, but he most definitely isn't a miracle worker." Yumi chimed in.

"Taunting your classmates isn't a very good thing, Nomura-san." he reprimanded.

Disgustingly enough, Yumi fluttered her lashes and put on a shy smile, "Alright, I'll behave, but only if you tell me what *your* first choice is."

Asuka tilted her head. She wasn't going to lie, the question did get her intrigued. Would it be Tokyo High that catered to big brains? Or Somei high school that nurtured people with money? Or Kaneshon that wasn't inherently mediocre and closer to his home? Or—

"U.A."

Her eyebrows furrowed, "U.A.?"

"Really?" Yumi squealed, "I'm applying there for the general department too!"

"Oh," he scratched the back of his head, "I'm applying for the hero course."

"That's no problem!" Yumi responded, her eyes practically molding into hearts, "I can apply there too! We can become heroes together!"

"Can you both stop before I vomit out the window?"

Heisuke rolled his eyes, "What'd you apply for anyways?"

"Same as you." Yumi quipped energetically, "This is so cool, I'll be at the entrance exam with you guys!"

"Or half the class." Asuka divulged.

"That's fair." Yumi shrugged.

Then the bell rang, signifying the end of lunch, and students started filing inside. But later when the day ended and she and Heisuke started trailing their way to the train station, the thought that had been bothering her shot out of her mouth.

"A hero? All this time you wanted to be a hero? How come that *never* came up?"

He looked at her weirdly, "You never asked?"

"But you *could've* told me."

Heisuke shrugged, "You never told me either."

"Really?" she said, tone laced with incredulity, "I tell you about my training sessions, how could you not figure it out?"

"Hey, I just assumed you were learning self-defense because your otou-san was a hero."

They stopped at a traffic light, "Why would I learn self-defense with his weapon bindings?"

He groaned, "I don't know, don't parents pass on their teachings to their children?— Why's this such a big deal again?"

She huffed, stomping forward just as the light turned green, "It's *not*. I also just *assumed* that you'd be more into politics, or maybe become a lawyer, or a *dictator*— oh wow, you've got more zeal in those punches now, I think it tickled a bit this time."

"We have a *democracy*," he said, narrowing his eyes as he retracted his fist from her shoulder.

"Yeah, well, you freeze up at the worst moments, you're all bark and no bite, and let's not even talk about how your punches are practically tofu, so all in all, I didn't think *heroics* is what you'd want to pursue."

He scowled, "That's what the school's for. I'll be working on my issues, alright? Not everyone can bulldoze through meatheads like you can."

"You mean not everyone can be as courageous as I am?"

"I sometimes *hate* talking to you."

She suppressed a grin, “Alright, jokes aside, how the hell do you plan on passing the entrance exam?”

“Huh?” his eyebrows furrowed.

“Really, Ikari? You think they’re going to let you in based on some written test?”

She stepped on the pavement, then absurdly kicked the back of her shin with her foot, instinctively making her hand fly to the nearest thing supporting her, which happened to be— “You know, I’d prefer you *not* yank my shirt while you’re falling on your face.” Heisuke gritted out, irately steadying her by the collar.

“Oh sorry, next time, I’ll *ask* before bashing my head into the concrete.”

“And we were *just* talking about the entrance exam,” he retorted, attempting to push her sideways to which she easily didn’t move. Being innately clumsy and being pushed by a twig were two immensely different situations.

“You don’t have to worry about me.”

He quirked a perfectly pink brow, “You speak as if you’ve already aced the exam.”

Asuka grinned.

“Wait a minute,” his expression changed, “are you getting in through your—”

“I’m taking the recommendation exam.”

He sighed, “Knowing heroes sure has its perks.”

“For your information, even if I *do* get their recommendation, it would be for nothing if I can’t ace the exam— which I will— so even if I *am* borrowing Papa’s power to make my path much easier, I’ll still be doing the majority of the work.”

“I wasn’t accusing you of anything,” he said. Defensively.

They descended a flight of stairs along with a multitude of people, and he tugged her collar from behind like he always did just because she stumbled *one* time. Or a few times. “Ugh, stop sulking you, baby. I’ll help you pass the practical exam.”

“And how can you possibly do that?” he asked cynically.

When she got off the last step, she unpocketed her train pass, “What do you mean how? We’ve got to train you to use that quirk of yours if you don’t want people farting up your face.”

“That’s illegal!”

“Alright, you keep telling yourself that and fail the exam miserably.”

“I can handle myself just fine!”

Then thirteen minutes into the train ride, he made her cackle by wearing the most constipated face while asking: “Suppose if we have adult supervision, like your otou-san, *then* I could consider agreeing to your offer.”

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Chapter End Notes

HELO!

I did mention in my end notes that this fic will have irregular updates, so even if y'all see me not updating for months, please do realize that I'm not dropping the fic, 'cos if I do, I'll make a special chapter announcing that. But otherwise, I don't have plans on doing that.

Canonically, I think the war lasted two days, but from the way this story is written, I've extended it to at least a month or so. There are going to be two-time skips. And the first one will be effective starting from the next chapter > <

Also, WE HIT 2000 KUDOS!!!!

A MILLION THANKS FOR THAT!!!

I'd also like to mention that your comments are something I read and cherish. You guys are the BEST and I love you all for supporting me, whether it be through silent cheers, through comments or kudos, or even the little comments you leave in the bookmarks, they all warm my heart T-T

Once again, a HUGE thanks and I hope this chapter was enjoyable to read!

List of OC's:

Kamimura Ryoto- officer at HSC

Maruyama Eiko- officer at HSC

Takayama Kozume- godfather

Haruto- Kozume's right-hand man/ employees at Suji&co

Abi- the man with the shadow quirk/ works in the corruption union.

Nomura Yumi, Matsuda Daishi, Okamoto Hisayo, Ikari Heisuke—
Classmates and friends



End Notes

Made up hero shifts:

Day heroes: 6am-12pm

Day heroes: 12pm- 6pm

Underground heroes: 6pm-12am

Underground heroes: 12am- 6am

- Age/time factors in this story may be a bit inaccurate but please bear with me, I'm not the best at math.
- I renamed Sakura, Asuka because I could. (also, I just think the name just fits really well)
- List of OC's will conclude names only if they are mentioned in the chapter.
- Yes I'm going to wing all the chapters. Because this work is impulsive af and the first ever work to be published that I had no solid outline in or wasn't pre written. So updates are going to be irregular.
- Time is CHANGED now. I made a blunder in the dates when it's supposed to be far into the future > <
(Updated:11/6/2021)

If any of you want to reach out to me, here's my tumblr, [carmin3](#)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!